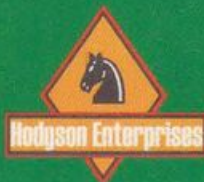


**BOOK
No. 2**

ATTACK

WITH

GM JULIAN HODGSON





Attack

with

G.M. Julian Hodgson

Book 2

By Julian Hodgson



LONDON

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To Lira & Exano
For all their support and encouragement

A Hodgson Enterprise Book

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INTRODUCTION

My basic motto has always been that chess above all else should be FUN. In the second book of this series on attacking chess I have selected forty more glorious games to whet your appetite.

I have tried to explain the beauty of these games with the written word as much as possible. I am not a great believer in reeling out long variations to describe what is going on. I have done this basically for two reasons: it makes the book easier on the eye and makes the games a lot more enjoyable to follow. You don't have to be Garry Kasparov (or even Deep(er) Blue!) to get the gist of what is going on!

I hope that if these games inspire you half as much as they have inspired me, you will notice a definite improvement and increased enjoyment in your play.

I have received many encouraging letters on the first book; here is one of the many that has already made writing this series on attacking chess so rewarding and explains in a nutshell what I have tried to achieve.

"...I think your book is excellent and one of the best I have come across. It really has just the right amount of analysis and is printed with unusual clarity. The games are great fun and your enthusiasm shines through beautifully.....Congratulations on a super production."

Dr Cyril Josephs, for whom chess is a hobby.

I hope you have as much fun reading this book as I have had writing it!

The Attack Statistics Box

I am a great believer in the theory that if you have more pieces attacking than your opponent has defending, then the chances of your attack succeeding are quite high. One important point to remember, however, and one that is often forgotten is that the king counts as a defender (and also on less frequent occasions (e.g. endings) even as an attacker).

When looking at these games with my wife (estimated strength 1500) I noticed that she did not always count all the correct pieces (especially the indirect) that were attacking and defending. This is a key part of playing chess well. I therefore thought that it might be useful to show as a simplified diagram what a grandmaster counts when deciding whether an attack is viable. You may want to use these to test if you are counting correctly too.

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♔ ♖ ♗ ♘ A Direct	♙ ♚ C Indirect	5 E
Defence	♚ ♗ ♘ B Direct	♖ ♙ D Indirect	4 F

Let me briefly explain each section.

Box

- A.** These are the direct attackers. Each piece in this box is valued at one point. I should just add that in exceptional cases pawns can count as well.

- B.** These are the direct defenders. Each piece in this box is valued at one point.

- C.** These are the indirect attackers. Each piece in this box is valued as a half point. Indirect attackers are those pieces that can join the attack within a couple of moves.

- D.** These are the indirect defenders. Each piece in this box is valued as a half point. Indirect defenders are those pieces that can join the defence within a couple of moves.

- E.** Sum total of direct and indirect attackers.

- F.** Sum total of direct and indirect defenders.

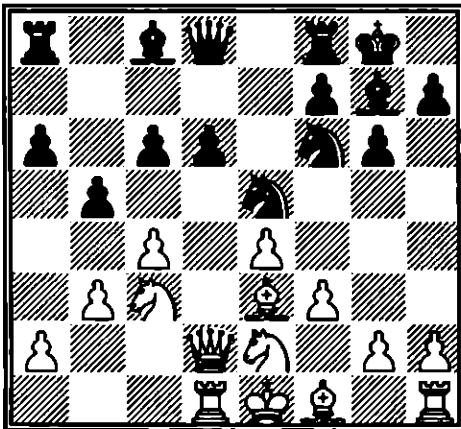
If we now subtract box F from box E, then as a general rule the greater the positive value the greater the chance of the attack succeeding.

This of course is only a rough guide so it needs to be used with care. I could modify this system considerably but then it would lose much of its point as then it would no longer act as a quick and easy guide to see at a glance.

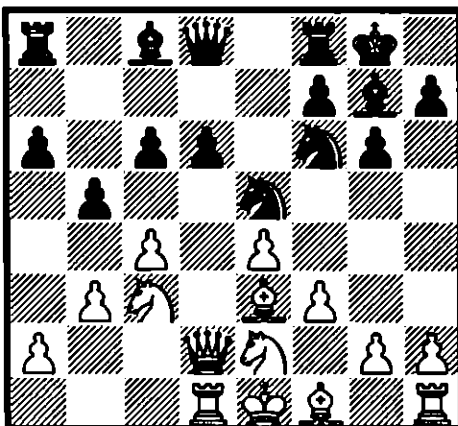
NOTATION

+	Check
!	Good Move
!!	Excellent move
?	Bad Move
??	Blunder
!?	Interesting Move
?!	Dubious Move
WCC	World Championship Cycle

Types of Diagram



Diagrams with double edged lines are positions from main game.



Diagrams with single thick line are positions from side variations.

I MATING SACRIFICES

There is something especially gratifying about sacrificing material to deliver checkmate.

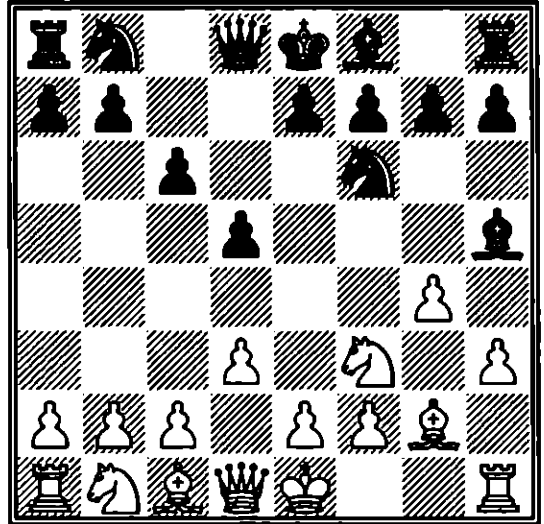
Usually the greater the sacrifice (i.e. risk) the greater the thrill. There are all sorts of sacrifices but these are the ones that seem to be the most spectacular. But, be warned, if your opponent's king does manage to find an escape route then you can be left looking rather silly.

GAME 1

Over the years I have had several encounters with England's highest ever rated player, Nigel Short. In general, the results have not gone in my favour, but I thought I would share my sole victory with you. It was played fourteen years ago when Nigel was on the verge of becoming England's youngest grandmaster. This defeat, however, only delayed the inevitable by a few months.

White: Julian Hodgson
Black: Nigel Short
Brighton 1983
King's Indian Attack

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 d5 3 ♖g2
 c6 4 d3 ♖g4 5 h3 ♖h5 6 g4



In those days I was not averse to shoving up my kingside pawns. Now I am a little more circumspect about making such pawn thrusts so early on in the game.

6 ... ♖g6 7 ♘h4

This is the point - I'm going to "win" a bishop for a knight.

7 ... e5

Possibly 7 ... e6 was a safer course of action but Nigel is a great believer in counterattacking as quickly as possible when he has the black pieces.

8 ♘c3 ♖e7 9 e3 0-0?

After this automatic move Nigel is in serious trouble because I am already well placed to

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson

launch a pawnstorm against the black king. Worthy of consideration was $9 \dots \text{♖fd7!}$? when after 10 ♗xg6 hxg6 Black should be OK.

10 ♗xg6 hxg6

Natural, but probably bad. The anti-positional $10 \dots \text{fxg6}$ would have been safer but then Black's position is something of a wreck as the white squares are horribly weakened. Now, however, I can play for checkmate with a clear conscience.

11 g5!

Let the pawnstorm commence!

11 ... ♖e8

$11 \dots \text{♗h5}$ would lose a pawn after 12 h4 followed by 13 ♙f3 .

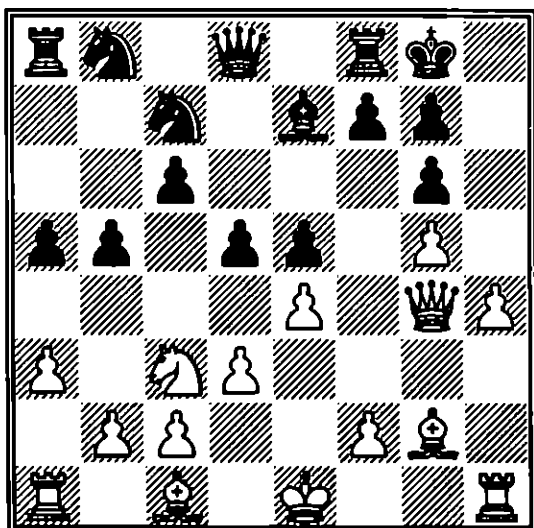
12 h4 b5

Nigel makes a desperate bid for counterplay on the queenside.

13 a3!

I thought I would take a timeout to hold it up for a few moves.

13 ... a5 14 ♕g4 ♗c7 15 e4!



A very strong move. Nigel now has an unpleasant choice:

A) Should he close the position with $d4$ which gives White a free hand on the kingside?

B) Should he leave the tension in the centre and risk my bishop on $g2$ becoming master of all that it surveys?

Neither option is particularly appetising.

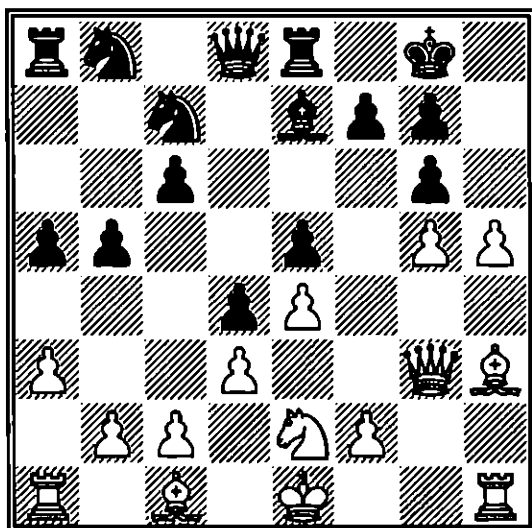
15 ... d4

Nigel chooses the former option. I felt I could really get to grips with the black king on $g8$.

16 ♗e2 ♕d7 17 ♕g3!

Of course White does not allow the exchange of queens.

17 ... ♖e8 18 ♙h3 ♕d8 19 h5!



An excellent pawn sacrifice.

19 ... ♙d6

If Nigel had captured the pawn on $h5$ with $19 \dots \text{gxh5}$ then 20 g6! is crushing as Black has no

Mating Sacrifices

way to prevent a white square invasion.

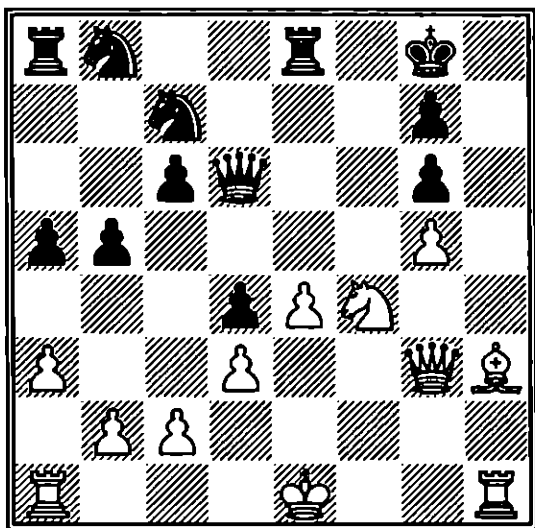
20 hxg6 fxg6 21 f4!

This pawn thrust lets my queenside pieces come into play.

21 ... exf4

This is forced as Black has to prevent 22 f5.

22 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 23 ♘xf4 ♚d6



I had now seen a clear path to victory. It would be so easy to play a move like ♚h4 in an attempt to invade down the h file. But I realised that all I needed was my queen's rook for my attack to be overwhelming. One of the problems Nigel faces is that there is no way that his pair of slow moving knights can get across to the kingside in time.

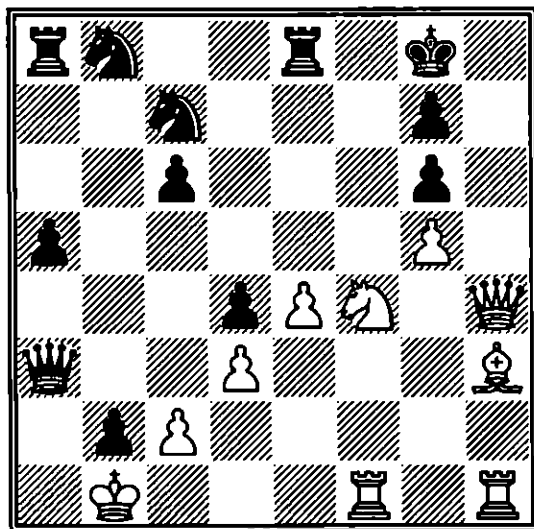
24 0-0-0 b4 25 ♖df1!

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♚ ♖ ♗ ♘ ♙		5
Defence	♙ ♖ ♗		3

From the stats box we can see

how defenceless the black king is - the queenside pieces are simply not pulling their weight.

25 ... bxa3 26 ♚h4! axb2+ 27 ♖b1 ♚a3



Finally Nigel manages to threaten something but unfortunately for him it is White's go first. Can you find the finish?

28 ♚h7+!!

And that was that. 28 ♚h8+ would have proved equally effective. Here are the two possible variations; in both cases it is mate next move.

A) 28 ♚h7+ ♖xh7 29 ♖e6 mate.

B) 28 ♚h7+ ♖f7 29 ♘xg6 mate.

GAME 2

For the last couple of years INTEL sponsored a wonderful series of rapidplay events in which 16 of the world's top players would fight it out to the

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson

death in a knockout tournament.

These events made for great entertainment and were even snapped up by several television companies for worldwide coverage. My only hope is that more events such as this one are held in the future as they make a great advert for the game.

White: Judit Polgar
Black: Vladimir Epishin
Geneva 1996

Caro Kann 4 ... ♘d7

**1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4
4 ♘xe4 ♘d7**

This line of the Caro Kann is one of Black's most solid and reliable ways of meeting 1 e4.

It could not have come as a great surprise to Judit when Vladimir wielded it out, as he is one of Anatoly Karpov's seconds, and this opening is Karpov's main defence to e4. Vladimir would have been hoping to draw with Black and then win the return game with White. It didn't quite work out that way.

5 ♙c4 ♘gf6 6 ♘g5!

Judit goes for an early mating attack!

6 ... e6

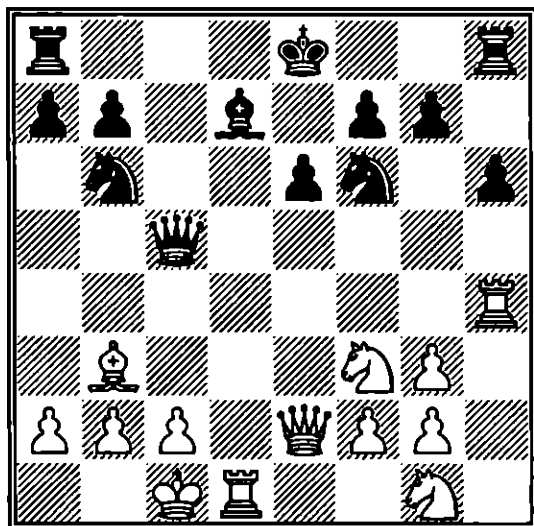
Vladimir is up to the challenge.

7 ♚e2 ♘b6 8 ♙b3 h6 9

**♘5f3 c5 10 ♙f4 ♙d6 11
♙g3 ♚c7 12 dxc5 ♚xc5 13
0-0-0 ♙xg3 14 hxg3**

This is a fairly standard position that can arise from this opening. Black's main problem in this position is trying to find a safe haven for his king. It cannot really stay in the centre; on the kingside there is a semi-open h file for White to attack down, while the queenside looks distinctly draughty. If Black could now simply exchange queens he would resolve most of his problems as the ending would be fine. However, this is easier said than done.

14 ... ♙d7 15 ♚h4!



This is one of Judit's best moves of the game. 15 ♚h4 does not only prepare the doubling of rooks on the h file but also dramatically increases the activity of the rook as it now controls a lot of important squares along the fourth rank. Rook moves such as this are often overlooked in the middle game.

Mating Sacrifices

15 ... ♖c8

Vladimir brings his rook to the semi-open c file which means he is now committed to castling kingside. Judit who has been waiting to see which way Vladimir would castle, can now start making provisions for her kingside onslaught.

16 ♖e5 ♗b5 17 ♔e1 0-0

The deed has been done! Now Judit can storm the bastions.

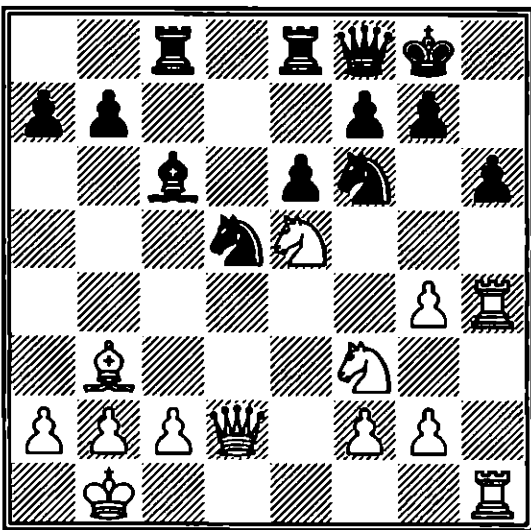
18 ♖gf3 ♖bd5 19 ♔b1!

Excellently played. Judit makes this precautionary move to secure the safety of her own king before making inroads on her opponent's.

19 ... ♗c6 20 ♔d2 ♖fe8 21 ♖dh1

Now 21 ♖xh6! is threatened.

21 ... ♔f8 22 g4!



The pawn is now used as a battering ram to smash open the way for the heavy artillery.

22 ... ♖e4 23 ♔e1 ♖d6 24

g5!

The pawn continues on its merry way.

24 ... ♖f5 25 gxh6!

Judit is never worried about giving up material when the opponent's king is up for grabs. I'm sure by this stage of the game time trouble would have been adding to Vladimir's woes. In this form of chess he would have only had 25 minutes to complete the whole game.

25 ... ♖xh4 26 h7+!

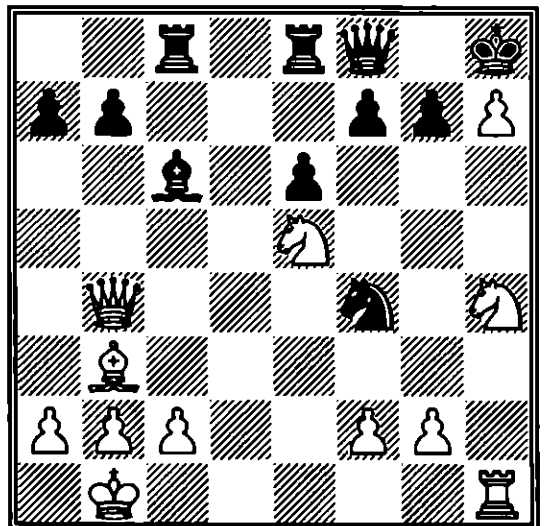
This pawn just keeps marching on. It is immune to capture because after 26 ... ♖xh7 27 ♖xh4+ ♖g8 28 ♔h1! forces mate.

26 ... ♔h8 27 ♖xh4 ♖f4

The only way to prevent 28 ♖hg6+.

28 ♔b4!!

This was one for the crowd! Judit attempts to forcefully eject Black's one good defensive piece, the knight, from f4.

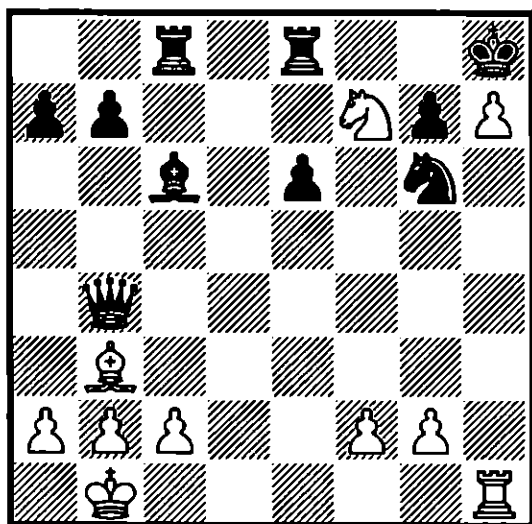


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I should also point out that the more mundane 28 ♖d2 would have served the same purpose just as well.

28 ... g5

This horrible pawn weakening is a necessary evil. I must admit I would have been tempted to go out in a blaze of glory with 28 ... ♖xb4 which would have allowed 29 ♜hg6+!! ♜xg6 30 ♜xf7 mate.



29 ♖d4

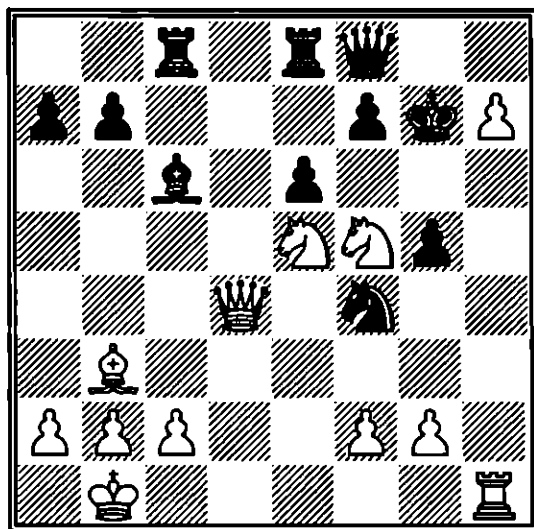
Now we see the drawback of Vladimir's last move - the fatal weakening of the a1 - h8 diagonal.

29 ... ♔g7

There is nothing better. All roads now lead to Rome (well almost!), but Judit's next move is by far the most beautiful.

30 ♜f5+!!

This should lead to forced mate in five more moves... .



30 ... exf5 31 h8♖+

But Judit doesn't see it! 31 ♜d7+! would have led to mate as follows 31 ... f6 32 h8♖+! ♖xh8 33 ♖xf6 mate.

I often say if you have seen one win, then play it! Don't get confused looking for a quicker one. So many times I've seen a player become muddled in their thinking looking for a faster win, then blunder, and only draw or even lose the game.

31 ... ♖xh8 32 ♜xf7+

Vladimir resigned. I doubt that he would have fancied his chances of holding out a whole queen down after 32 ... ♔g6 33 ♜xh8+.

Judit went on to win the match 2 - 0. She was only knocked out by the World Champion Gary Kasparov in the semi-finals.

GAME 3

Vasilios Kotronias is definitely one of life's more entertaining characters. He is Greek's number one player who loves to attack whenever the opportunity presents itself. On the several occasions that I have studied chess with him I have found his enthusiasm for the game quite infectious.

The first time I met him in person was at a round robin event in the heart of Manhattan in 1990. He wiped me out and then proceeded to demolish one of my fellow countryman in one of his pet systems against the Caro Kann Defence. After the game he proceeded to give an impromptu lecture for several of the other players and spectators as to how it was all done.

White: Vasilios Kotronias

Black: Daniel King

New York 1990

Advanced Caro Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 ♖f5 4 ♘c3!?

Vasilios has had many snappy victories with this move which is much more aggressive than the positional approach with 4 ♘f3.

4 ... ♜b6 5 ♙d3!?

It might seem strange to ex-

change the bishops but Vasilios is hoping to gain a large lead in development.

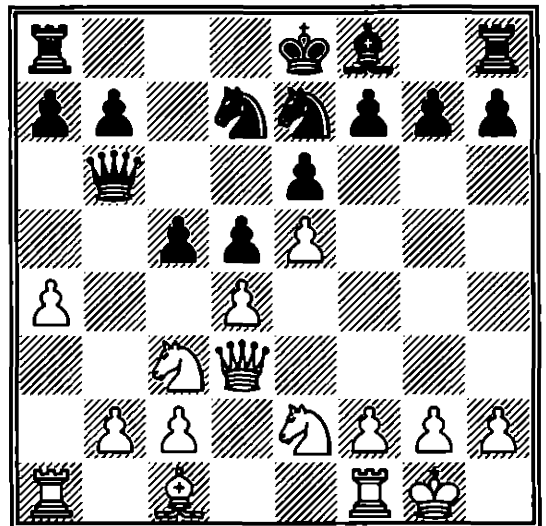
5 ... ♙xd3

You might be wondering why Danny didn't try 5 ... ♜xd4!? which is indeed playable but extremely risky. I have won many games against my computer as follows: 6 ♘ce2!? ♜xe5 7 ♘f3 ♜f6 8 ♙g5 ♜e6 9 ♘fd4 ♜g6 10 ♙xf5 ♜xg5 11 ♙c8! with excellent compensation.

6 ♜xd3 e6 7 ♘ge2 ♘d7 8 0-0 ♘e7 9 a4!

A good move that prepares to harry the black queen from its fine post on b6.

9 ... c5!?



Danny decides to fight fire with fire but opening up the centre when still underdeveloped is a risky venture to say the least.

10 a5 ♜c6 11 dxc5 ♘xe5 12 ♜g3 ♘5g6

Black's pieces have become a little log jammed. It will take a

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson

long time before Black's king finds shelter on the kingside.

13 ♖d4 ♔xc5 **14** ♕e3

Vasilios has reached a dream position in which he can attack at will - Black's extra pawn is scant consolation.

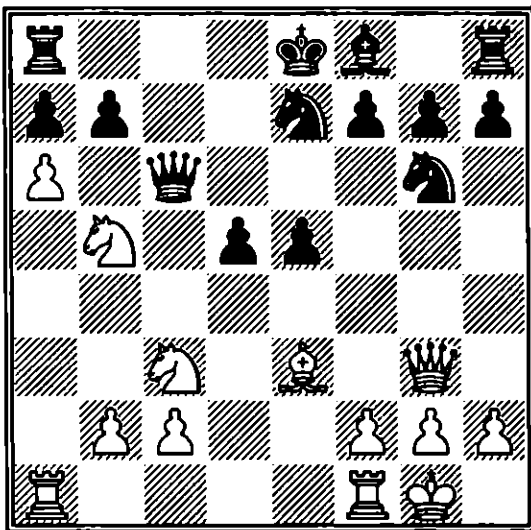
14 ... e5!

Danny finds the most challenging defence. He is going to make Vasilios work every inch of the way.

15 ♖db5 ♔c6!

Danny avoids the obvious 15 ... d4? which leads to the following catastrophe: 16 ♕xd4! exd4 17 ♖c7+ ♖d8 18 ♖xa8 dxc3 and now White's rooks come in for the kill. 19 ♖fd1+ ♖c8 20 ♖b6+! The knight sacrifices bring White's other rook into the game 20 ... axb6 21 axb6 followed by a mating rook check on a8.

16 a6!



A very powerful move that serves four functions:

A) It secures the knight on b5 by stopping Black himself from playing a6.

B) It softens up the h1-a8 diagonal.

C) In an endgame it can become a real asset because if White captures the vulnerable black pawn on a7 then it will be extremely close to queening.

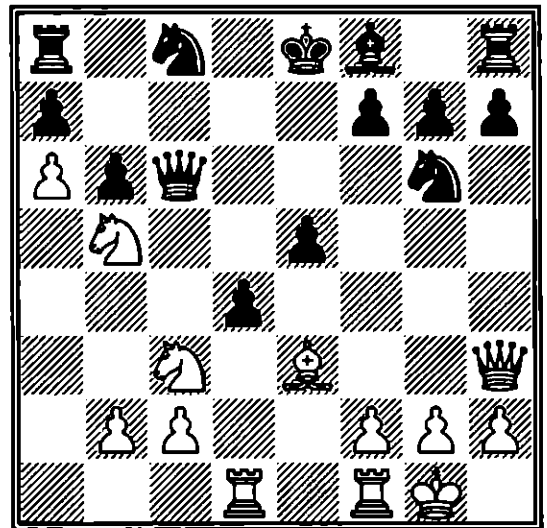
D) It deprives Black of the b7 square for his pieces, the black king included.

16 ... b6

Sadly forced as 16 ... bxa6 loses to 17 ♖xa6! ♔xa6 18 ♖c7+ winning the queen.

17 ♖ad1 d4 **18** ♔h3 ♖c8

Capturing either piece would have been met by a devastating knight check on d6.



19 ♕xd4!

Vasilios plays such sacrifices in his sleep. He would know that the open central files would spell a quick end if Danny recaptured on d4. e.g. 19 ... exd4 20 ♖xd4 ♔c7 21 ♔f3 exploiting

Mating Sacrifices

Black's weaknesses down the h1-a8 diagonal. 21 ... ♖b8 22 ♖c6 when total carnage ensues.

19 ... ♖d6 20 ♖fe1!

Another highly thematic move from the Greek magician - just compare the relative merits of each sides' rooks.

20 ... ♖xb5 21 ♖xe5 ♖e7 22 ♖xb5 0-0

At least Danny manages to castle but he has lost most of his position in the process. Capturing the knight on b5 would have not changed the situation as after 22 ... ♗xb5 23 ♖xg7 ♖g8 24 ♗xh7 White's rooks are just too powerful as they tear down the two open central files.

23 ♖d4 ♗c5 24 b4!

Vasilios is now a pawn up but not for one moment does he relax his grip on the position.

24 ... ♗c4

Capturing the pawn on b4 with 24 ... ♗xb4 would allow 25 ♖c6 followed by 26 ♖xe7+ and 27 ♖d6! which would win the exchange against any of Black's best possible defences.

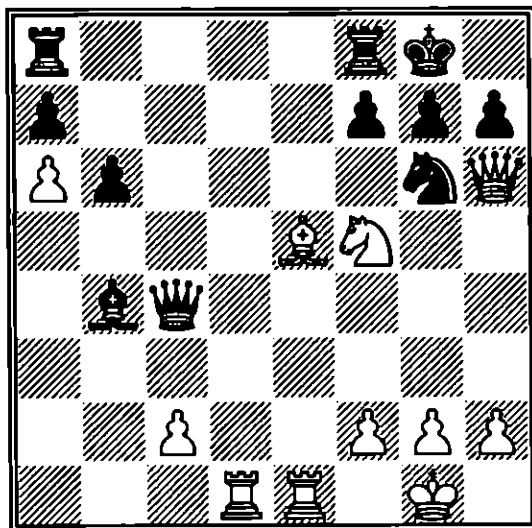
25 ♖f5!

The knight heads over to the vicinity of the black king. F5 is invariably a great square for attacking purposes.

25 ... ♖xb4

I had been watching this game while it was in progress. I got quite a shock when Vasilios, quick as a flash, whipped out his incredible reply.

26 ♗h6!!



An idea well worth remembering. Mate is inevitable on either g7 or h6. A great game that flowed from start to finish - on his day Vasilios can beat virtually anyone.

GAME 4

Mark Hebden has become a legend in his own lifetime on the English weekend circuit. Over the last couple of decades he has won more weekends than any other English player. When Mark is feeling focused (or in the zone) then he is almost unstoppable. Take a look at this first round miniature from the 1989 British Championships which had finished before most

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of the other games had even really started.

White: Donald Holmes
Black: Mark Hebden
British Championship 1989
King's Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 f4!?

The exclamation mark is for bravery; the question mark is for naiveté! For most of the eighties Mark himself was the world's leading exponent on the white side of the King's Gambit, chalking up many impressive victories. Eventually, he decided to part ways with this romantic opening - Mr Holmes is about to discover why!

2 ... exf4!

The only way to refute a gambit is to accept it as I heard someone once say! I am not so sure if this is always sound advice but as general rules go, it is not such a bad one.

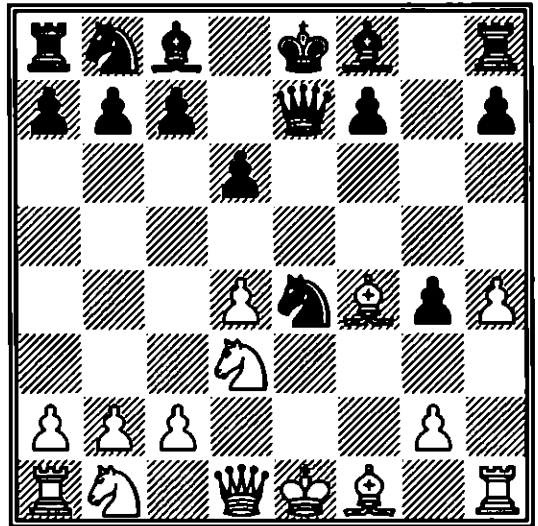
3 ♘f3 g5 4 h4 g4 5 ♘e5

This is the Kieseritzky Gambit. It was popularised by Lionel Adelberto Bagration Felix Kieseritzky who lived from 1806-53. It is considered one of the key main lines of the entire King's Gambit.

5 ... ♘f6 6 d4 d6 7 ♘d3 ♘xe4 8 ♙xf4 ♚e7!

Not only does Mark threaten a

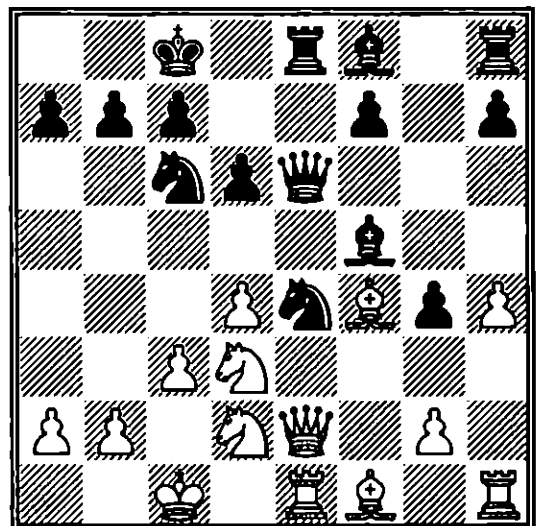
discovered check but he also prepares to castle into relative safety on the queenside. I have to say I can't really see where White's compensation for the pawn is coming from. He has one lovely square on f4 but this shouldn't be enough.



9 ♚e2 ♘c6 10 c3 ♙f5 11 ♘d2 0-0-0 12 0-0-0

White's king is not well placed here as quickly becomes apparent, but castling kingside is not so easily achieved.

12 ... ♖e8! 13 ♖e1 ♚e6!



Mating Sacrifices

After this probing move White's position is critical. There is simply no adequate way to defend the a2 pawn. Black is a pawn up with the attack!

14 a3

Aaargh! This looks horrible but the natural 14 ♔b1 would lose immediately to 14 ... ♘xd2+ 15 ♙xd2 ♚xe2 16 ♙xe2 ♜xe2! winning the house.

14 ... ♚a2!

With Black's queen here White's king is in constant danger.

15 ♚d1 h5

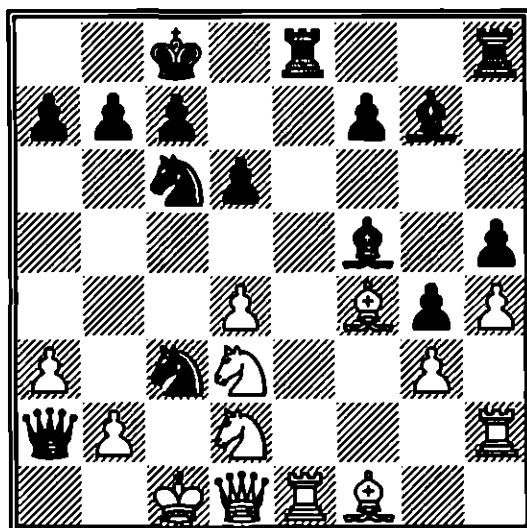
This move was not strictly necessary but I suspect that Mark was enjoying himself so much that he was in no real hurry to finish his opponent off.

16 g3 ♙g7

Now Mark has every one of his pieces lined up against White's king.

17 ♜h2 ♘xc3!

It just had to be. This sacrifice smashes open the queenside for the rest of Black's pieces to pile in en masse.



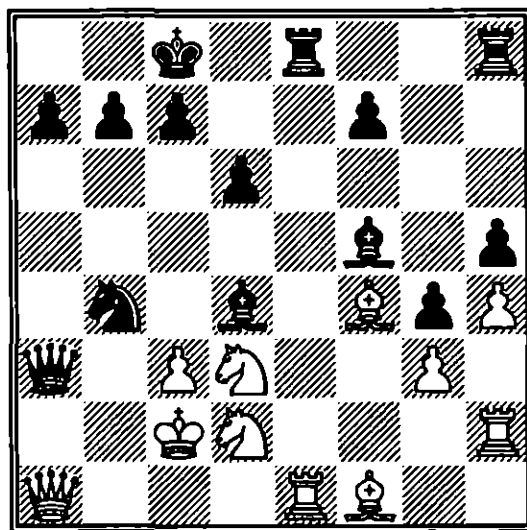
18 bxc3 ♚xa3+ 19 ♔c2

19 ♔b1 ♚xc3 is equally hopeless for White.

19 ... ♙xd4! 20 ♚a1

20 cxd4 ♘b4+ is not very pretty for White either.

20 ... ♘b4+!



And that was about it. Holmes needed his Watson!

2 STRANDED KINGS

Stranded kings are like beached whales: extremely cumbersome and sad to watch. In the next chapter the defeated player suffers from one of a chess player's never-ending nightmares - the inability to get the king castled to safety.

It is worth spending quite a lot of time and energy to keep the opponent's king pinned in the centre. Their army will often suffer from a lack of co-ordination (especially their rooks which fail to become connected) and all the other pieces which are forced to waste much of their valuable time protecting their vulnerable monarch.

GAME 5

Gary Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov have played each other literally hundreds of times (at least it certainly feels like that!) contesting no less than five World Championship matches. It took Nigel Short's great triumph over Anatoly Karpov in 1992 in their semi final match to halt the two K's monopoly on the World Championship.

Since their last World Championship match in New York in 1990 the two K's have found themselves in conflict on the chess board a lot less. However, perhaps their most one-sided encounter ever took place in Linares 1993. There Gary Kasparov wiped poor old Anatoly off the face of the earth and what's more to rub salt in the wounds he did it with the black pieces.

White: Anatoly Karpov

Black: Gary Kasparov

Linares 1993

King's Indian Sämisch

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3
 ♙g7 4 e4 d6

No prizes for guessing the opening. Over the years Kasparov has remained extremely loyal to his beloved King's Indian.

5 f3 0-0 6 ♙e3 e5 7 ♘ge2
 c6 8 ♚d2 ♘bd7 9 ♖d1

Anatoly lines up down the d file. The one drawback to his play is that he is still a long way from completing his kingside devel-

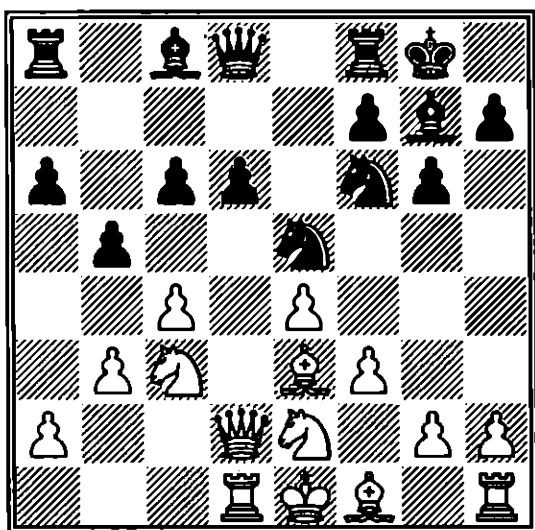
Stranded Kings

opment which means his king will be perilously placed in the centre for at least a few more moves.

9 ... a6 10 dxe5?

10 d5 to close the centre would have been more prudent. Now Gary gets exactly what he wants - a chance to blow the position wide open...

10 ... ♞xe5 11 b3 b5!



Gary goes on the offensive - he has no intention of meekly defending the d6 pawn.

12 cxb5

Anatoly would have been reluctant to make this capture as now Black's rook on a8 springs to life. But he had no real choice as 12 ♛xd6 ♛xd6 13 ♜xd6 bxc4! is also not very promising for him.

12 ... axb5 13 ♛xd6 ♞fd7 14 f4 b4!!

This is the key move that justifies Gary's previous play - out of nowhere he develops a huge

initiative.

15 ♞b1

The main point of Black's fourteenth move is seen if White had captured the pawn on b4 when the following beautiful variation would have arisen: 15 ♛xb4 c5!! (White's queen is almost trapped) 16 ♔xc5 ♞xc5! 17 ♜xd8 ♞ed3+ 18 ♚d2 ♞xb4 when Black's extra piece and active play is worth a lot more than White's three pawns.

15 ... ♞g4 16 ♔d4 ♔xd4 17 ♛xd4 ♜xa2

With this move Gary not only wins his pawn back but also brings his rook into the game. Now it paralyses White along the second rank.

18 h3 c5!

Gary continues to parry any move of his opponent's with another thrust of his own.

19 ♛g1 ♞gf6 20 e5 ♞e4 21 h4

This might look like an outrageous attacking lunge from Karpov but in fact it is a desperate attempt by Anatoly to develop his king's rook via h3.

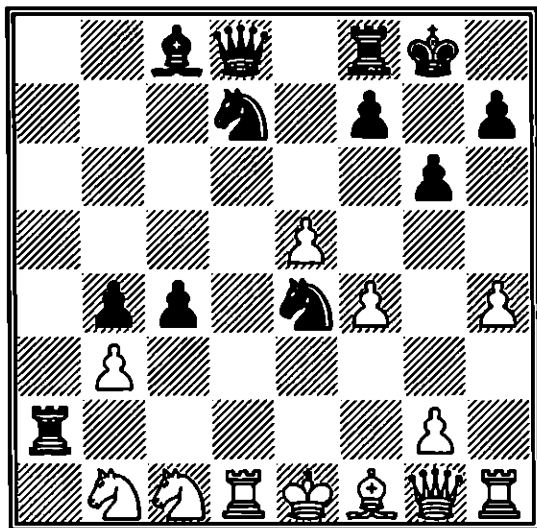
21 ... c4!

It is extremely impressive and also highly instructive how the World Champion combines pawn play with piece play to the maximum effect.

22 ♞c1

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

White's position is a real picture! It looks like Anatoly has already decided to give this game up and start a new one. The one difference being this time he intends to play Bobby Fischer's new game where the starting position of the pieces is selected at random!

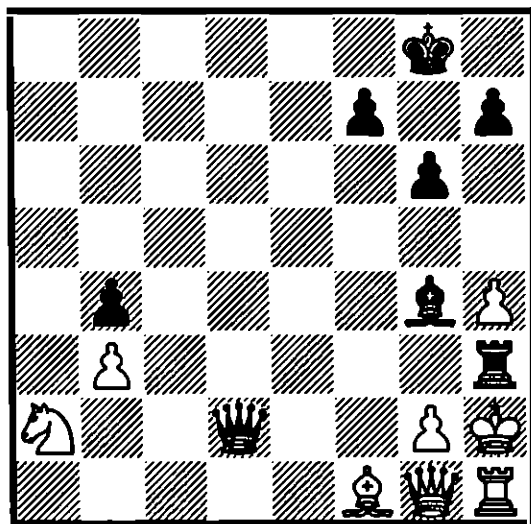


22 ... c3!

Gary is prepared to give up his rook on a2 to maintain the momentum of the c pawn. I suspect most of us mortals would have chosen the more prosaic 22 ... ♖b2 but then we probably wouldn't have reached this position in the first place!

23 ♖xa2 c2 24 ♕d4

Karpov, no doubt extremely dejected, goes down without a fight. However, against the natural alternative 24 ♖c1 Gary had planned a seven move variation leading to mate: 24 ... ♖xe5! 25 ♖xc2 ♕g4 26 ♖d2 ♖xd2 27 ♖xd2 ♖e8! 28 fxe5 ♖xe5+ 29 ♖f2 ♕xd2+ 30 ♖g3 ♖e3+ 31 ♖h2 ♖h3 mate.



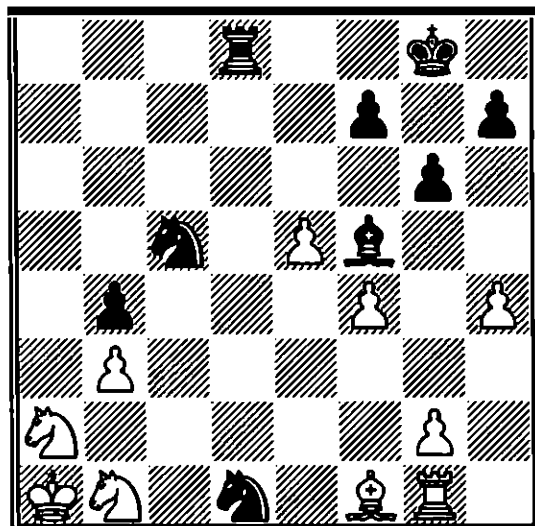
A finish that would have pleased the crowds.

24 ... cxd1♕+ 25 ♖xd1 ♖dc5!

Exchanging queens only increases the ferocity of Black's attack.

26 ♕xd8 ♖xd8+ 27 ♖c2 ♖f2!

And now I suspect much to Karpov's relief he lost on time. My favourite finish would have been 28 ♖g1 ♕f5+ 29 ♖b2 ♖d1+ 30 ♖a1



When I will leave you, the reader, to work out Black's next move.

Stranded Kings

This game has to be one of the great attacking achievements of the century. How it was not voted one of the all time ten best games of the Informator series (judged by a panel of Grandmasters in Informator 68) remains something of a mystery to me.

GAME 6

For more than a decade from the early eighties onwards, the outgoing and sociable Yasser Seirawan has been America's strongest player. He has a rare strategic insight and positional understanding of the game that very few players have or can aspire to attain. It is because of these qualities that Yasser is considered by many people (myself included) to be the strongest player at knowing how to beat computers. The silicon chip simply cannot deal with Yasser's depth and breadth of thought. However, when the mood takes him Yasser can also be a devastating master of the attack as the following game amply demonstrates:

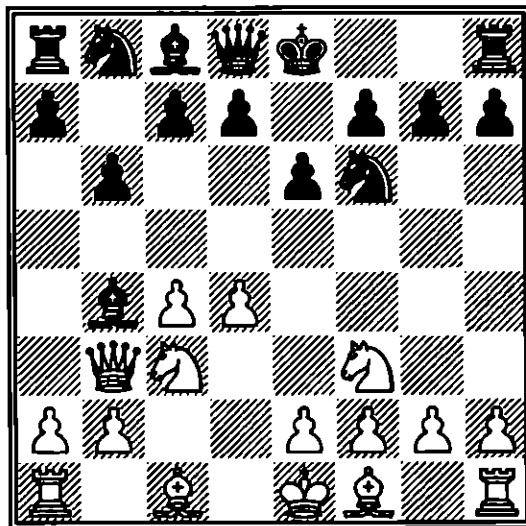
White: Yasser Seirawan

Black: Pablo Zarnicki

Buenos Aires Najdorf 1993

Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6
4 ♘c3 ♙b4 5 ♚b3!?



An interesting move that serves several purposes:

A) It prevents Black from doubling White's queenside pawns by taking the knight on c3 as White can now recapture with the queen.

B) The queen attacks the bishop which will force Black to spend valuable time dealing with this threat.

C) From b3 the queen still maintains an influence over the all important central squares, especially d5.

D) Finally, White is one step further in achieving one of his potential objectives - castling queenside!

5 ... c5 6 a3 ♙a5 7 ♙g5
♘c6 8 0-0-0!?

A quite remarkable move. It is not often that White castles queenside against the Nimzo-Indian. The rook on d1 is immediately brought into the game

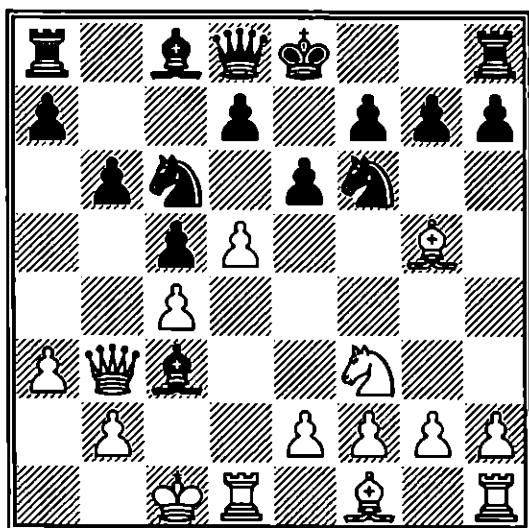
ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

to bear pressure down the d file. The knight on c3 is suddenly unpinned and therefore free to hop into b5 or even e4 when Black's bishop would look extremely stupid on a5. The only slight drawback of this move is that White has to be a little careful with his king as it can become somewhat exposed on c1.

8 ... ♖xc3

Black does not allow White a chance to move his knight...

9 d5!!



What's this! Has Yasser just blundered a piece? No, he has simply upped the ante by attacking another black minor piece - sooner or later he will win the piece back. The point is that after the obvious 9 ♖xc3 Black would have been able to play the clever 9 ... ♘e4! which would solve all his problems.

9 ... ♗e5

Believe it or not, Yasser had reached an almost identical

position three years before in a match against Holland's number one, Jan Timman. Jan had tried 9 ... exd5 but Yasser triumphed even quicker in that game!

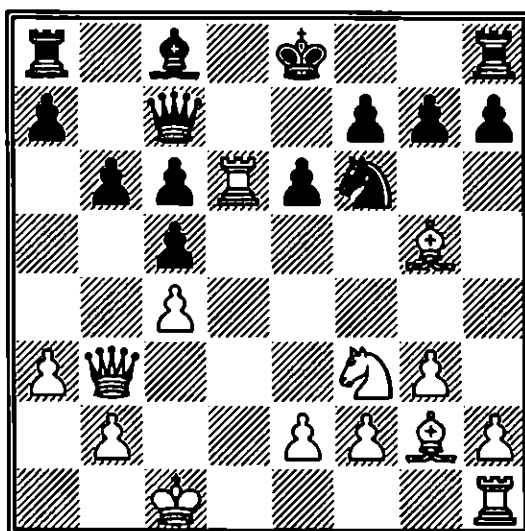
10 dxc6 ♜c7 11 g3!

This quiet move is one of my favourite moves of the game. With all hell breaking out all over the board, what does Yasser do? He calmly prepares the completion of his kingside development. Yasser knows that for his attack to have maximum impact, he needs ALL his pieces combining as one effective attacking unit.

11 ... ♗d6

Against 11 ... ♖xc6 Yasser had planned the following beautiful continuation: 12 ♘xe5! ♖xh1 13 ♘f3!, trapping firstly the queen on h1, 13 ... ♗b7 14 ♗h3 ♗xf3 15 ♖xh1 ♗xh1 16 f3!! and then the bishop! Black is helpless against the simple plan of ♖d1 followed by ♖xh1.

12 ♗g2 dxc6 13 ♖xd6!



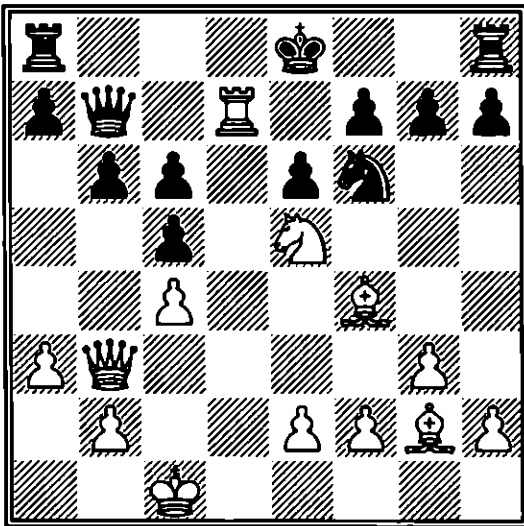
Stranded Kings

Crash! This exchange sacrifice rips away one of Black's key defenders. On top of that Yasser gets to bring his last undeveloped piece (the rook on h1) into the game with tempo.

13 ... ♖xd6 14 ♔d1 ♜c7 15 ♕f4!

The bishop is no longer needed on g5 so it retreats to the h2-b8 diagonal which has already been softened up by White's excellent 13th move.

15 ... ♜b7 16 ♞e5 ♕d7 17 ♖xd7!



Wonderful! White's first exchange sacrifice opened up Black on all the dark squares while this second one has exactly the same effect but this time on all the light squares.

17 ... ♞xd7 18 ♕xc6 ♜a6 19 ♞xd7

Three minor pieces are roughly the material equivalent of two rooks. But that is not the case here as there are three good

reasons why White's position is so overwhelming:

A) The queens are still on the board, which favours White's attack.

B) Black's rooks are both asleep on their original squares.

C) Black's king is stuck out in the open.

One interesting point to note is that White's knight has more possible moves than the two black rooks put together!

19 ... ♜c8

19 ... 0-0-0 was one amusing possibility (the move is legal!) but it would be rather well met by 20 ♞xc5!

20 ♕a4 ♔e7 21 ♜d3!

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♜ ♕ ♞ ♞ ♞ ♞		4
Defence	♔ ♜		2

The queen has done its job on b3 so now it heads for d6 from where it can orchestrate the final phase of the proceedings.

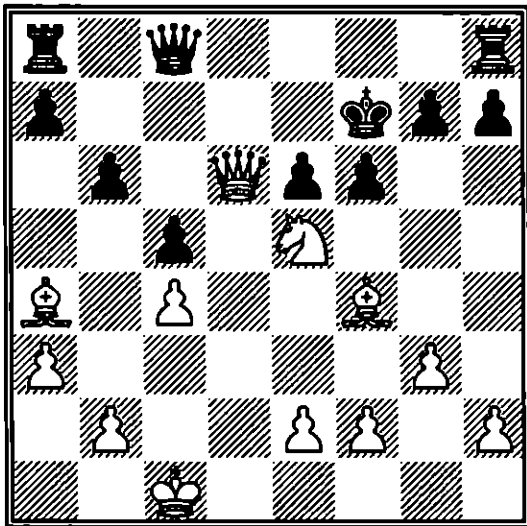
21 ... f6

This move is more or less forced as Black has to find one escape square for his king.

22 ♜d6+ ♔f7 23 ♞e5+!!

The knight, having done an excellent job on d7 (capturing a knight and preventing Black from castling kingside) gladly gives itself up to make way for

the bishop.



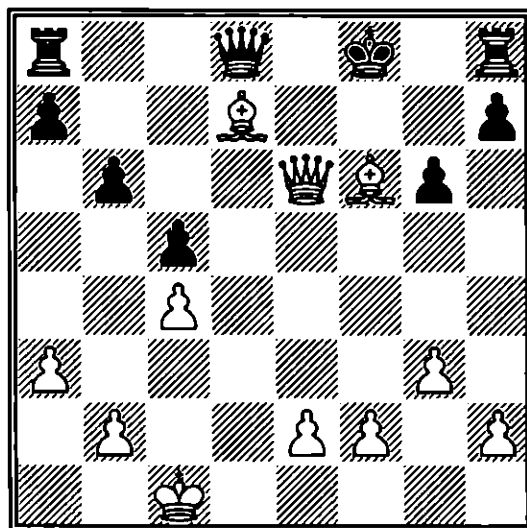
23 ... fxe5 24 ♙d7 ♚d8

24 ... exf4 25 ♚xe6+ ♔f8 26 ♙xc8 is equally hopeless.

25 ♚xe6+ ♔f8 26 ♙xc8 g6

Sadly forced as Black needs a luft for his king.

27 ♙f6!



A nice touch - Why take a rook when you can win a queen?

One remarkable feature of this game which I especially liked was the fact that Black never got to move either one of his rooks.

GAME 7

Every so often I come across a game that just seems to flow from start to finish. This was definitely the case with the following one. Yuri Yakovich and Giorgi Giorgadze are two amiable guys who I had met several times on my relatively frequent visits to the Soviet Union in the eighties.

Yuri produces a real attacking masterpiece in which all his pieces combine in total harmony to first lure the enemy king into the open and then box it into a corner where it meets its maker. Let the show begin.

White: Yuri Yakovich

Black: Giorgi Giorgadze

Yerevan Open 1996

Meran Defence

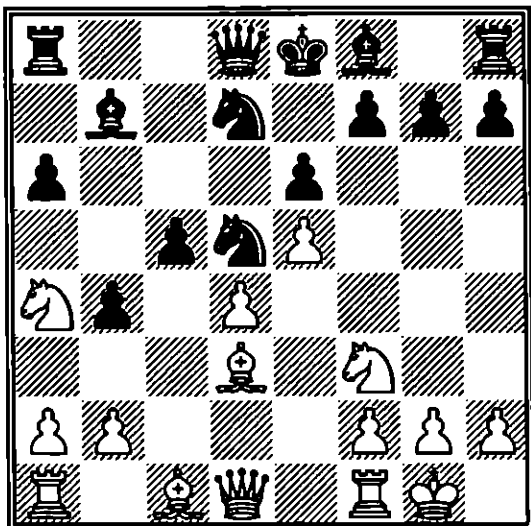
**1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 ♗f6
4 e3 e6 5 ♗f3 ♗bd7 6 ♙d3
dxc4 7 ♙xc4 b5 8 ♙d3
♙b7 9 e4 b4 10 ♗a4 c5 11
e5 ♗d5 12 0-0**

Although I, myself, know relatively little about this position it is a standard one reached from the Slav. Black tries to undermine White's extended centre while White aims to use his lead in development to gain play against Black's king which is still stuck on its original square.

Stranded Kings

12 ... a6?!

Can Giorgi really afford the luxury of such pawn moves when time is of the essence? I doubt it.



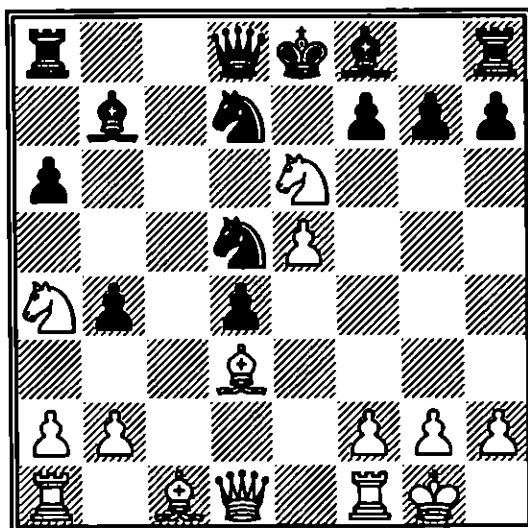
Clearly he wanted to control the b5 square but the move played has the additional drawback of weakening b6 which White's knight on a4 may one day be able to take advantage of. I would have preferred the more natural 12 ... cxd4 when a heavy theoretical debate would have ensued.

13 ♖g5!

Why not? Yuri decides that he is well enough developed to launch an immediate offensive against the black king. Now both the vulnerable f7 and e6 points are targeted.

13 ... cxd4 14 ♘xe6!!

It is such moves that make chess really worth playing. The shock value alone is almost worth a piece!



14 ... fxe6 15 ♛h5+

The knight sacrifice has opened up the h5-e8 diagonal for the white queen to seriously inconvenience the black king - it won't be castling in this game!

15 ... ♔e7

It is time to go walkabout. The only alternative 15 ... g6 would have left Black seriously down on material after the following forcing variation 16 ♙xg6+! hxg6 17 ♛xg6+ ♔e7 18 ♙g5+ ♘5f6 19 ♙xf6+ ♘xf6 20 ♛xf6+ ♔e8 21 ♛xh8 - an exchange and two pawns to be precise.

16 ♙g5+!

What a corker! The bishop gets developed, gives check and skewers the king to the black queen all in one move.

16 ... ♘5f6 17 ♚fe1!

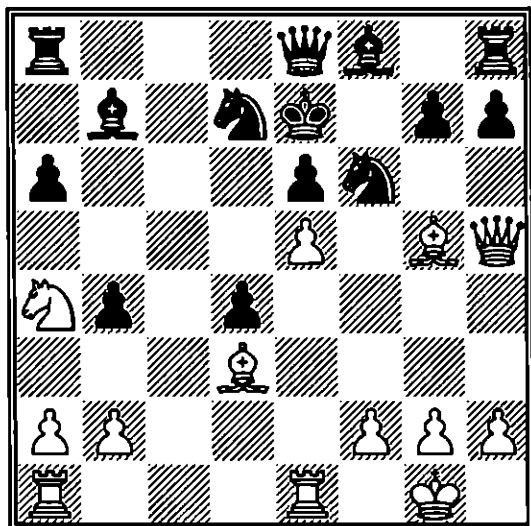
One of Yuri's best moves of the game. He calmly brings his reserves into the fray. There is absolutely no hurry to capture on f6 as the poor knight can

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

only await its inevitable end unable to flee on account of the deadly pin.

17 ... ♖e8

Giorgi dreams of the exchange of queens - a rather forlorn hope.

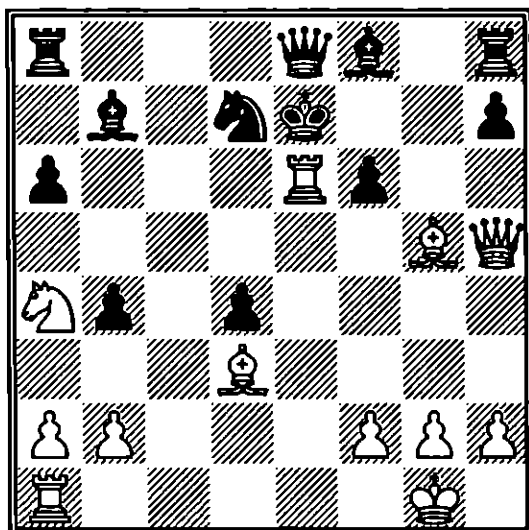


Can you see how Yuri piles on the pressure? Without wishing to spoil your enjoyment I'll give you a clue - his next five moves are all played with check.

18 exf6+

This was easy...

18 ... gxf6 19 ♖xe6+!!



But did you see this one coming? Temporarily Yuri is a rook

down but he would have seen that with all his pieces attacking he has every chance of success.

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♖ ♗ ♘ ♙	♜ ♝ ♞ ♟	5
Defence	♔ ♕ ♖ ♗	♜ ♝ ♞ ♟	4

And the stats box shows us why Yuri was so confident of a favourable outcome. Giorgi on the other hand would have been seriously worried. His king is his most centralised piece while all the remaining ones are still sleeping on the back two ranks - definitely not a promising sign!

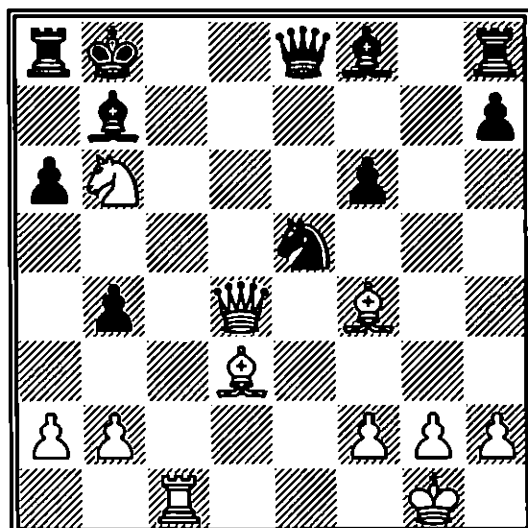
19 ... ♔xe6 20 ♖g4+!

Backward diagonal queen retreats are always worth an exclamation mark because they are SO easy to miss.

20 ... ♔d6 21 ♖xd4+ ♔c7 22 ♖c1+

For the third time Yuri gets to develop a piece with check.

22 ... ♔b8 23 ♖f4+ ♗e5 24 ♖b6!



Stranded Kings

The hole that Black's weak 12th move created is now filled. ♖d7+ is the rather unpleasant threat which is far from easy to prevent.

24 ... ♖a7

At least Giorgi has the satisfaction of moving one of his rooks before the curtain comes down.

25 ♖d7+ ♔a8 26 ♖b6+

It might look as if White is really rubbing it in. However, this is simply standard Russian policy of repeating the position once when the opportunity arises to lessen the possibility of losing on time. I, myself, don't tend to do it as it seriously increases the chances of allowing a draw by threefold repetition.

26 ... ♔b8 27 ♖d7+ ♔a8 28 ♕e3

The final switchback. Mate on a7 is on the agenda and there is not an awful lot that Giorgi can do to stop it.

28 ... ♖c6 29 ♖xc6 ♕xe3 30 ♖b6+ ♔b8 31 ♕d8+

Giorgi now resigned. If only chess was always like this.

Yuri's handling of the attack was faultless. I suspect we have seen the definitive refutation of 12 ... a6.

of being an exceptionally strong positional player. However, there is another side to his play; when the mood takes him he is a fearsome attacking opponent, who can combine both subtlety and savagery to great effect.

In the following game he sets about the young Uzbek's king with a vengeance.

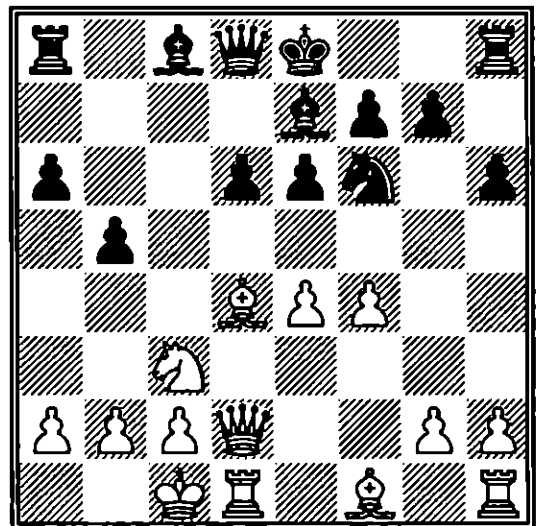
White: Michael Adams

Black: Grigory Serper

New York 1996

Sicilian Richter-Rauzer

**1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4
4 ♖xd4 ♖f6 5 ♖c3 ♖c6 6
♕g5 e6 7 ♕d2 a6 8 0-0-0
h6 9 ♕e3 ♕e7 10 f4 ♖xd4
11 ♕xd4 b5**



Five years ago in the Manila Olympiad Micky had reached this very position against the same opponent in England's match with Uzbekistan. In that game Micky played 12 ♕e2 and reached, after a complicated

GAME 8

Micky Adams has the reputation

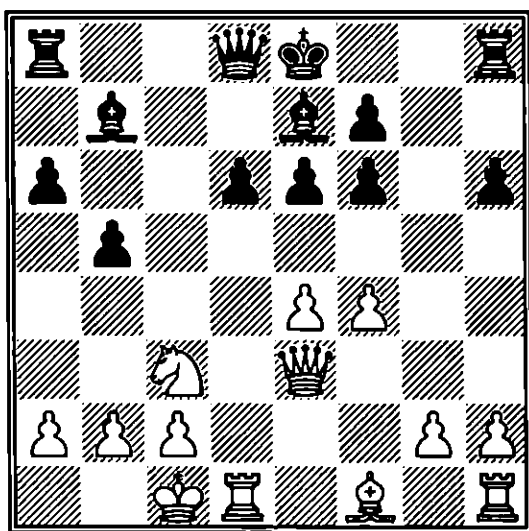
ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

midgame, an ending in which he was a pawn up but only managed to draw. After the game Micky was extremely disappointed and vowed that if he ever reached the same position again he would not let his opponent off the hook.

12 ♖e3!

This looks like a big improvement. The queen and bishop are nicely lined up on the g1 - a7 diagonal, while the rook on d1 can one day be a problem for the black queen on d8.

12 ... ♗b7 13 ♗xf6 gxf6



The natural 13 ... ♗xf6 is well met by 14 e5! when White attains a dangerous initiative.

The position after the text move is quite an interesting one. Black has the two bishops and a big mass of pawns in the centre but there is no really safe place for his king to reside in. Meanwhile White has a safe king and a slight lead in development.

White's general plan is simple: it will be to attack on the white squares. This is because the two white squared bishops are evenly matched, but a mismatch occurs with White's knight and Black's black squared bishop. So White can out-number Black on the white squares by one.

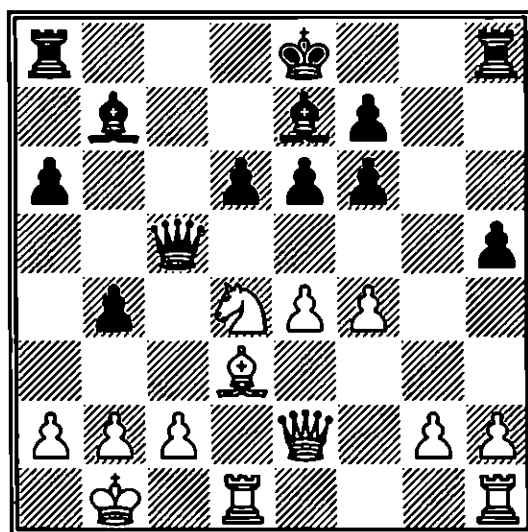
14 ♗d3 ♖a5 15 ♔b1!

A standard move that defends against the threat of b4. This is much stronger than 15 a3? because this would allow Black to rapidly open the b file with a quick b4.

15 ... b4 16 ♘e2 ♖c5 17 ♘d4!

Micky obviously avoids the exchange of queens as this would alleviate one of the main problems of Black's position, his dodgy king.

17 ... h5 18 ♖e2!



This move serves two purposes:

A) It unpins the knight on d4 which cannot be taken on ac-

Stranded Kings

count of ♖b5+ winning the black queen.

B) It places the queen on a white square which aids White's bishop and knight in their light squared attack.

18 ... a5

A double edged move. Serper is hoping to create some counterplay against White's king, but there are two main drawbacks to it.

A) This move delays Black's development for yet another move.

B) It allows a white piece access to the b5 square from where it can hassle the black king.

19 ♖b5+!

Precisely! Black's king won't be castling in this game.

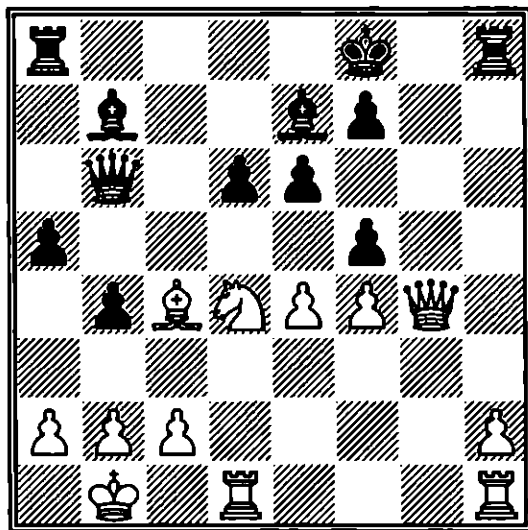
19 ... ♔f8 20 ♖c4

A clever little subtlety, the point of which is that now White is threatening to win a pawn with 21 ♖xe6 as 21 ... fxe6 is not possible because 22 ♖xe6 is check and so wins Black's queen on c5.

20 ... ♜b6 21 g4!

Easy when you know how! Black's king is trapped in the middle, so Micky tries to open files for his rooks and queen to unite all his pieces in their goal of checkmating the black king.

21 ... hxg4 22 ♜xg4 f5



23 ♖xe6+!!

Micky lands the big one! He is prepared to give up a whole knight in order to rip away the pawn cover from the black king. Note that it is no coincidence that the blow is landed on a white square.

23 ... fxe6 24 ♜g6

The white queen is dangerously close to Black's monarch. Micky now has two avenues of attack which makes Black's defensive task virtually impossible.

A) The a2-g8 diagonal - with both White's queen and bishop united in attack leaving g8, f7 and e6 especially vulnerable.

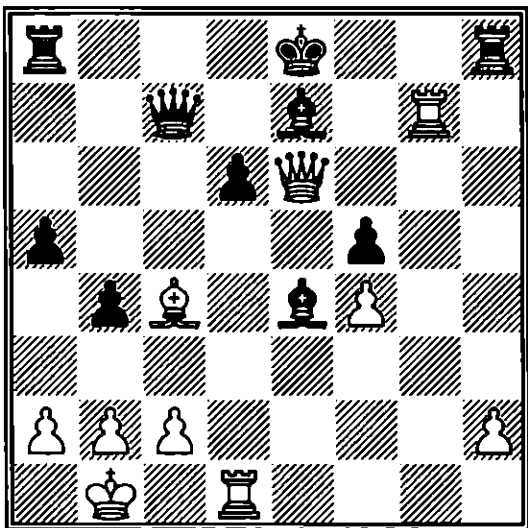
B) The g file - this gives White's rooks speedy access to the black king.

24 ... ♜c7

Serper could have tried to block the white diagonal with 24 ... d5 but then Micky would have used the other avenue, the g file, to infiltrate by playing 25 ♜hg1!

25 ♜xe6! ♔e8 26 ♜hg1

♙xe4 27 ♖g7!



This is the culmination of Micky's strategy: he has conquered both the crucial a2-g8 diagonal and the g file. White's threat is to double rooks on the g file and then play ♖g8. There is no way Serper can prevent this simple plan without suffering heavy casualties.

27 ... ♔d8 28 ♖xe7!

Cute! Micky now gets him on the d file.

28 ... ♕xe7 29 ♖xd6+ ♕xd6
30 ♕xd6+ ♔e8 31 ♕e5+

Serper now resigned because he will drop a bishop with 31 ... ♖d7 32 ♙b5+! ♙c6 33 ♕d5+! and that's about it! Micky kept his promise to himself.

day he can destroy absolutely anyone. I first came across him in a junior tournament in St Petersburg, in 1982, when I played him in the final round. He forced me to find a new defence to 1 e4 after annihilating my pet line of the Caro Cann Defence.

At a recent Bundesliga weekend, where we play for the same team, I asked him if he had played any great attacking games which I could use for my second book. In an instant he suggested the following game which played a crucial role in his winning the 1996 Russian Championship. This prestigious event took place in Elista, the home of the current F.I.D.E president, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov.

The game, itself, is a joy to behold as Alexander despatches in under 30 moves one of the world's most well known players, Yevgeny Sveshnikov. This the very same person who was one of the main founders of the Sveshnikov Defence (or the Pelikan as it is sometimes known.).

White: Alexander Khalifman
Black: Yevgeny Sveshnikov
Russian Championship 1996
Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 c6 4 g3 ♘f6 5 ♙g2 dxc4 6 0-0

GAME 9

The current Russian Champion, Alexander Khalifman, is one of the world's very elite. On his

Stranded Kings

b5

This is a standard type of position that can be reached from the Semi-Meran. Black is a pawn up and has no intention of allowing White to easily regain it. White is hoping to use his lead in development to exploit some of the weaknesses that 6 ... b5 has created.

7 a4!

Alexander begins the process of undermining Black's queenside pawn structure.

7 ... ♖b7 8 ♘e5

A good move that improves the position of the knight, opens the long diagonal for the g2 bishop and threatens 9 axb5.

8 ... ♚b6 9 b3!

Alexander deems it essential to quickly break up the queenside with Black's king still in the centre.

9 ... cxb3 10 ♚xb3 ♘bd7

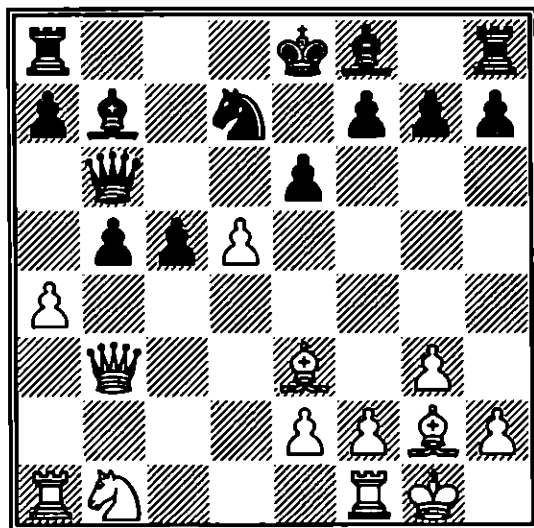
The greedy 10 ... ♚xd4 would have been a very tempting alternative but after 11 ♖b2 White's initiative is worth the two pawns. There are very few players in the world who would be willing to suffer the agonising defence that would be required to hold such a position.

11 ♖e3!

Alexander not only defends the d4 pawn but also prevents his opponent from exchanging off

his e5 knight as 11 ... ♘xe5 would lose a piece after the simple recapture 12 dxe5.

11 ... c5 12 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 13 d5!!



On showing me the game Alexander was extremely proud of this move which opens up the centre and prepares for the invasion of White's pieces on the light squares.

13 ... bxa4 14 ♚xa4 exd5

Yevgeny is two pawns up but that is the end of the good news. His position is about to be ripped apart. One very unfortunate aspect for him is the pin along the a4 - e8 diagonal.

15 ♘c3 d4

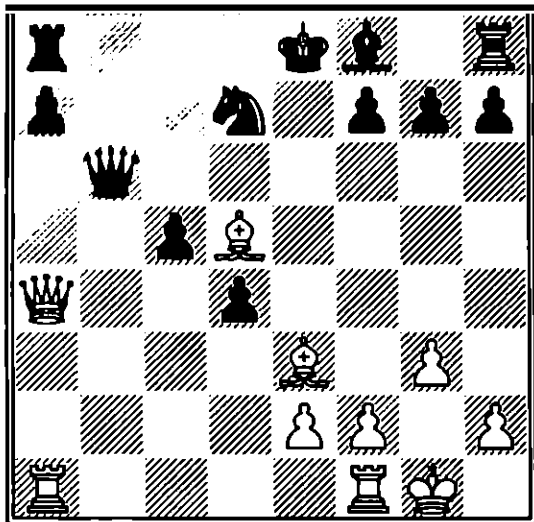
This is forced. 15 ... ♖c6 would have allowed 16 ♘xd5! ♖xa4 17 ♘xb6 ♘xb6 18 ♖xa8 when White emerges the exchange up.

16 ♘d5 ♖xd5

16 ... ♚d8 17 ♖f4 is no improvement for Black.

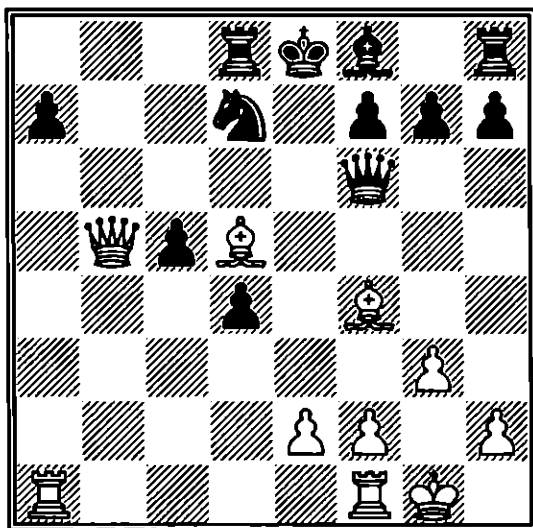
ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

17 ♖xc6



Now Alexander's d5 bishop is all powerful as its influence reaches all four corners of the board.

17 ... ♖d8 18 ♙f4 ♚f6 19 ♚b5!!



This quiet, creeping move finishes Black off. There is no answer to the invasion of White's rook to either a6 or a7.

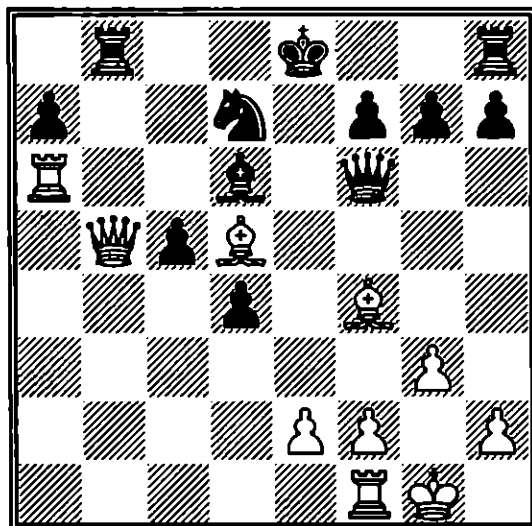
19 ... ♙d6

Note that 19 ... ♚b6 would not help on account of 20 ♚c4! targeting the vulnerable f7 point.

20 ♖a6!

PIN and WIN - this pin is decisive.

20 ... ♖b8



21 ♙b7!

The final last good move of this little miniature as it cuts out Black's last defensive resource with ♖b6. Now the bishop on d6 is doomed. The rest of the game plays itself.

21 ... ♙xf4 22 ♖xf6

A queen's a queen!

22 ... gxf6 23 gxf4 f5 24 ♚c6 ♙d8 25 ♚d5 ♙c7 26 ♙c6!

With the imminent collapse of his queenside, Black resigned.

3 NON STARTERS

I remember once losing a friendly game to David Bronstein, when I was about twelve years old. I was on the black side of the King's Gambit. David had played the Muzio Variation in which he sacrificed two pieces for a speedy victory. After the game he pointed to all my pieces (with the exception of my king!) and gently laid them on their sides. At this point he said in his broken English, "They are still sleeping."

In the games that follow you will find that at least two of the losing side's army never get into the game (non starters) - a handicap which is simply too large.

GAME 10

Every so often I make a really big effort to get psyched up for a game. This was definitely the case with the following one. I was White against Mihai Suba who had recently defected from Romania. Mihai is unusual in that he became a very strong player after only learning the moves in his mid-twenties. Mi-

hai has great strategic understanding but if the position becomes complicated he is liable to miss tactical blows (often a problem when chess is learned later in life). This partly explains my rather aggressive handling of the opening but I was also quite motivated as if I ended up in the top two in the tournament I would qualify for one of the Interzonal places.

White: Julian Hodgson

Black: Mihai Suba

Blackpool, British Zonal 1990
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 c3 ♗f6
4 ♙e2

I first heard about this move from one of Mike Basman's audio cassettes in the mid-seventies. The move is not nearly as insipid as it looks - indeed, even Michael Adams has been known to play it on the odd occasion.

4 ... ♗c6

This is the move that I was hoping for. It is worth pointing out that the greedy 4 ... ♗xe4?? would lose a piece to White's only queen check.

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

5 d4!

Now the fun really begins!

5 ...cxd4 6 cxd4 ♖xe4 7 d5 ♜a5+

This is forced as any knight move allows 8 ♜a4+ picking up the knight on e4.

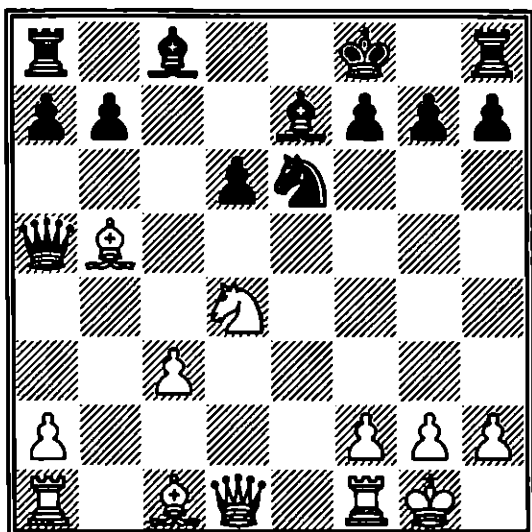
8 ♗c3 ♗xc3 9 bxc3 ♗d8

This timid retreat is actually quite prudent. What I was really hoping for was 9 ...♗e5!? 10 ♗xe5 ♜xc3+ 11 ♙d2 ♜xe5 12 0-0 ♜xd5 13 ♜b1! as demonstrated on Basman's tape. White is three pawns down but has fantastic compensation. The position is almost impossible to play for Black. Certainly worth a try against a computer!

10 0-0 e5 11 dxe6!

It is important for White to open the position up in order to exploit his lead in development.

11 ...♗xe6 12 ♗d4 ♙e7 13 ♙b5+ ♚f8



I was pleased to force my opponent's king to move before it had a chance to castle. Now it will take a long time for Black's rook on h8 to play any part in the remainder of the game.

14 ♜b1!

A good move that makes it awkward for Mihai to complete his queenside development without losing the b7 pawn.

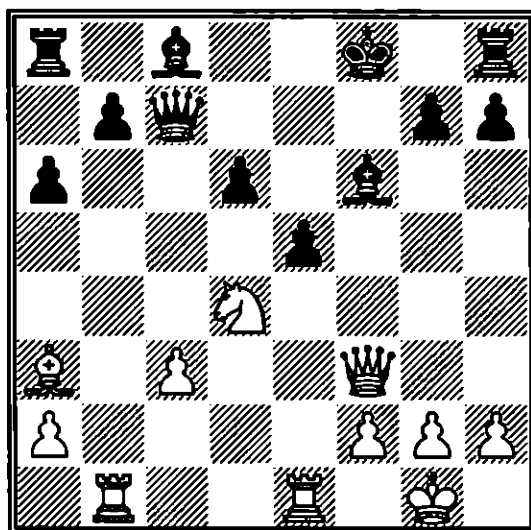
14 ...a6 15 ♙c4 ♜c7 16 ♙xe6?!

Natural, but probably not the best. If I had reached this position now I think I would simply have maintained the pressure with 16 ♜e2! Why give up a lovely bishop for a mere knight?

16 ...fxe6 17 ♜e1 e5!

Mihai rightly decides to oust my troublesome knight.

18 ♜f3+ ♙f6 19 ♙a3!



During the game I was very proud of this move - Mihai visibly rocked back in his chair as I played it.

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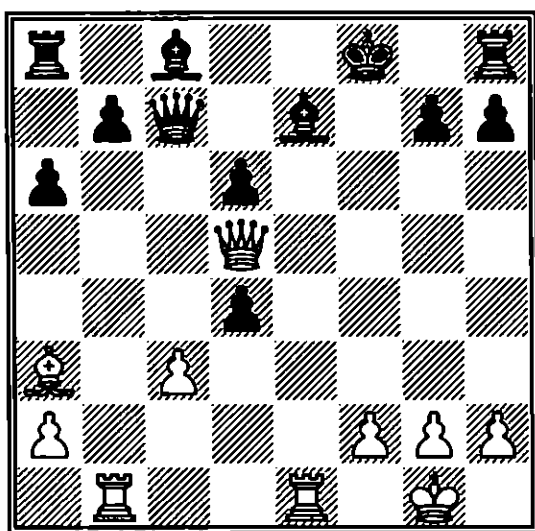
19 ...exd4

It is very tempting to grab a piece to try to relieve the pressure but now the white rook on e1 slices into the heart of Black's position. If we compare the activity of each sides rooks it does not look good for Black's chances of survival. After 19 ...♔g8 I had intended the positional 20 ♘c2! in order to re-route the knight to d5 via either b4 or e3.

20 ♗d5!

Wonderful centralisation - from here the queen dominates the entire board.

20 ...♙e7



21 ♖xe7!

I enjoyed playing this move - Black's one good defender is removed forthwith. Now the opposite coloured bishops really favour White.

21 ...♔xe7

Obviously not 21 ...♗xe7 on account of 22 ♙xd6 winning the

queen.

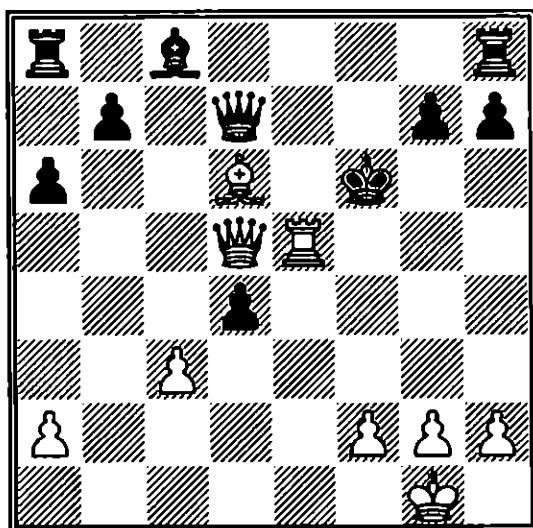
22 ♖e1+ ♔f6

Black does not really want to charge his king up the board but the alternatives are even worse.

23 ♙xd6 ♗d7

The best move in a difficult position.

24 ♖e5!



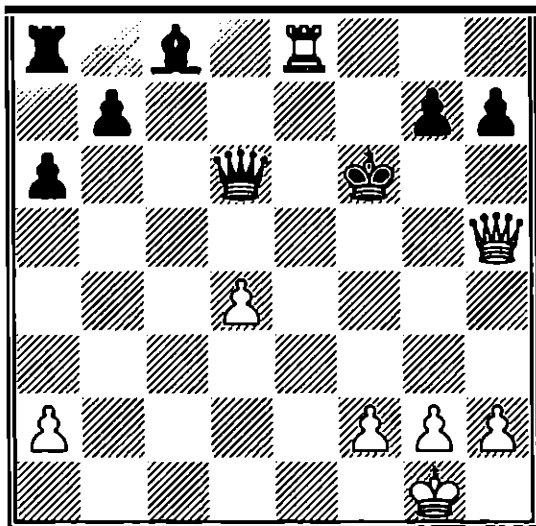
White continues his policy of centralisation. Black's king is gradually being surrounded by the white pieces. On the other hand, it is quite a bad sign for Mihai that it is his king that is his most centralised piece!

24 ...♖e8 25 ♗f3+ ♔g6 26 ♗h5+ ♔f6 27 ♗f3+ ♔g6 28 ♗h5+ ♔f6

After a little think I decided to play for the win. Taking a draw by perpetual check was never really an option although I gave my opponent some slight hope.

29 ♖xe8! ♗xd6 30 cxd4!

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2



Calm, cool and collected. The dust has settled somewhat but the problem for Mihai still continues. He just can't complete his development. My rook on e8 paralyses Black's queenside.

30 ...h6

Equally hopeless for Black are:

A) 30 ...g4 31 ♖e5+!

B) 30 ...♗xd4 31 ♜f8+ ♔e7 32 ♗f7+ with a king hunt to follow.

31 h4!

Now my h pawn joins the attack with decisive effect. There is the added bonus that now I no longer have to worry about back row mates.

31 ...a5 32 ♗f3+ ♔g6 33 h5+ ♔g5

Sad but true as 33 ...♔h7 is well met by 34 ♗f7! when both g8 and g6 cannot be adequately guarded.

34 ♜e5+ ♗xe5

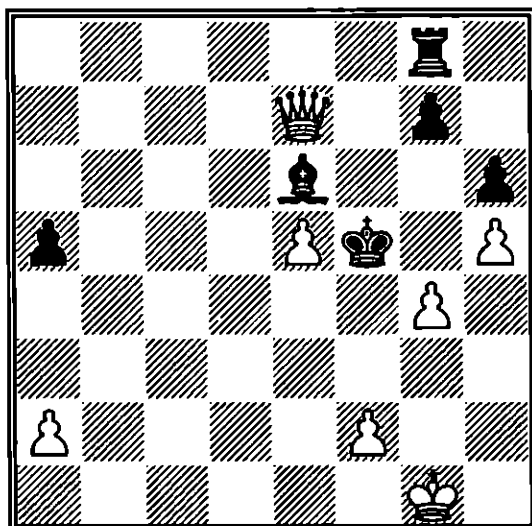
Forced. The rest of the game is just a technical process, of manoeuvring to pick up those loose

pawns and queen my own.

35 dxe5 ♗e6

At last Mihai gets to develop a queenside piece, but the battle has already come and gone.

36 ♗xb7 ♜g8 37 ♗e7+ ♔f5 38 g4+!



This pawn thrust wins more material.

38 ...♔xe5 39 f4+ ♔xf4

Or 39 ...♔d5 40 f5 ♗c8 41 ♗f7+ winning the rook.

40 ♗xe6 ♜d8 41 ♗f7+

As a slight aside, this win helped me to share second place with both Mihai and Michael Adams. Therefore, there had to be some form of play-off to decide who should take the second Interzonal place. In the end it was decided a random method would be used. Being Blackpool it seemed fitting to employ a bingo calling system. We all chose a number but Micky Adams's number 9 came up first. P.S. I chose 13!

GAME 11

Every so often a strong foreign player comes to England to try to make a living from playing chess. However, they soon find out there are two problems with this strategy: firstly there is not an awful lot of money and secondly the competition is rather tough.

One player who does seem to have managed it, is the highly talented Croatian, Bogdan Lalic. Bogdan is clearly a man who intends to stay as can be seen from the fact that he has married England's No. 1 woman player, Susan Lalic.

The following game was played in the 1995 Croatian Championships. A hour or so before the game Bogdan gave a television interview in which he stated that he intended to play a solid positional game (for which he is renowned in Croatia). He knew full well, however, that his opponent Vlado Kovacevic was listening to every word with great interest. Well, all I can say is that Bogdan fed him a right ringer! As you will soon see.

White: Bogdan Lalic
Black: Vlado Kovacevic
Croatian Championship 1995
Dutch Defence

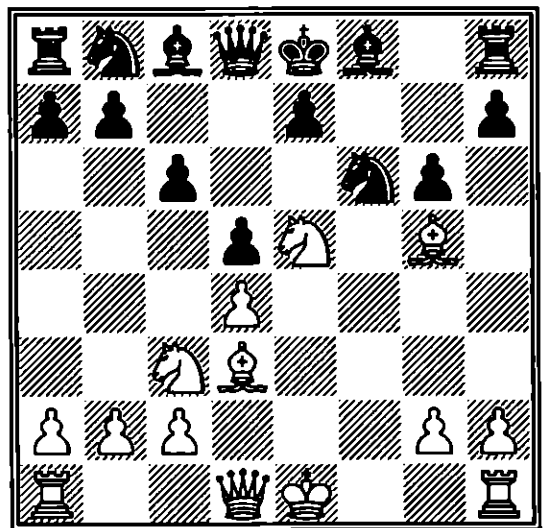
1 d4 f5 2 e4!!

This is the Staunton Gambit. One of the oldest gambits known to man. It is, however, anything but dull and positional! So by move two Bogdan had already gained the psychological high ground.

2 ... fxe4 3 ♖c3 ♗f6 4 ♙g5 c6

Modern day theory considers 4 ... ♗c6 as the best move in this position.

5 f3 exf3 6 ♗xf3 d5 7 ♙d3 g6 8 ♗e5!



Bogdan spots a nice, big, juicy square to plonk his knight in.

8 ... ♚b6

When you have almost a whole army to develop the queen is usually the last piece you should think about moving. This position is no exception as Vlado soon finds himself way behind in development. 8 ... ♙g7 was a wiser course of action although even then I like the look of White's position.

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

9 ♚e2!

Excellently played. Bogdan lines his queen up on the same file as the black king. This will create all sorts of tactical possibilities.

9 ... ♜xb2

9 ... ♜xd4? 10 0-0-0! is simply too awful to even contemplate.

10 0-0

Natural and also good. However, White's position is so good I would have even considered the rather strange looking 10 ♖d2 in order to keep the knight on c3.

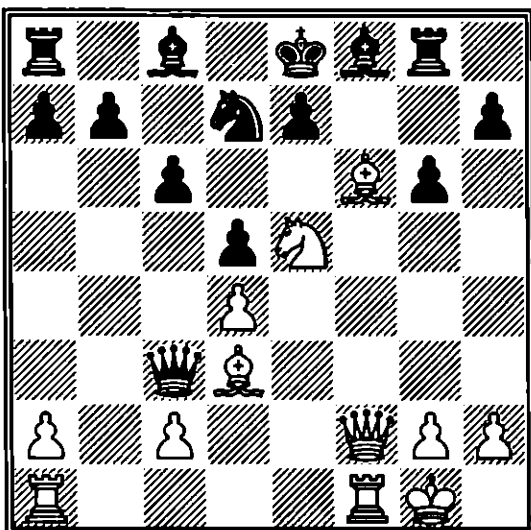
10 ... ♜xc3 11 ♙xf6 ♜g8

More or less forced as 11 ... exf6 12 ♘xg6+ ♖d8 13 ♘xh8 leaves White materially ahead with the attack.

12 ♜f2!

Now Bogdan lines his queen up on the f file from where it targets the very vulnerable f7 square.

12 ... ♞d7



Finally, Vlado gets round to developing one of his minor pieces. The alternative 12 ... exf6 13 ♜xf6 would not have been very promising.

13 ♙xe7!!

A bolt from the blue. Bogdan mercilessly rips away the pawn cover from the poor black king, while paving the way for the invasion of the white queen into f7.

13 ... ♙xe7

I spent a long time wondering what Bogdan would have done if Vlado had played 13 ... ♘xe5!? After several minutes thought I found a long, beautiful yet subtle continuation commencing with 14 ♙xf8 ♙f5 15 ♜ae1! bringing White's last piece into play. This position seems to favour White in all variations.

14 ♘xd7 ♙xd7

Bogdan now commences the mopping up operation.

15 ♜f7+!

One way or another the queen finds its way to f7.

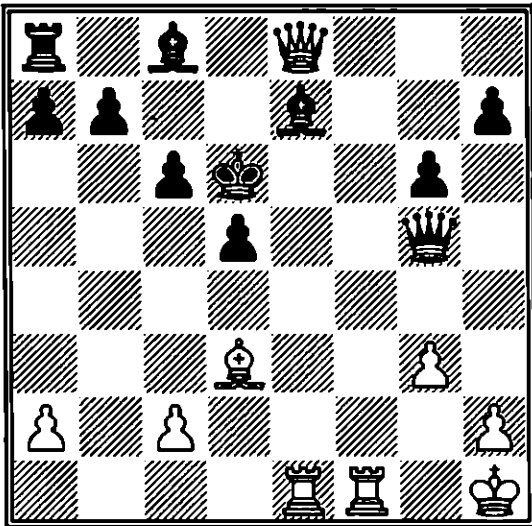
15 ... ♙e7 16 ♜xg8 ♜xd4+ 17 ♙h1

Materially the position is about level but that is the end of the good news for Black. On closer inspection we see that there is virtually no way that Black is going to be able to complete his queenside development due to

Non Starters

the pin on the 8th rank.

17 ... ♖h4 18 ♜ae1! ♔d6 19
g3 ♜g5 20 ♜e8!



After this move Black is completely tied up.

20 ... d4 21 h4! ♜d5+ 22
♔h2

Vlado now resigned, because he can neither move the bishop on e7 or protect it, which means he is doomed to lose material one way or another.

I wonder if Vlado will ever believe one of Bogdan's interviews again!

GAME 12

Over the years Joe Gallagher has been one of my best friends on the International chess circuit. Apart from sharing a rather misguided passion for Chelsea Football Club, we both have one other major thing in common - a

love for attacking chess.

Joe recounted to me the following story behind one of his more spectacular victories.

Before the tournament in Bern 1995, Joe had lost his three previous games against the Najdorf. He noticed these defeats followed a similar pattern: at the critical stage just when he should have been thinking of playing moves such as e5 and f5, he would find himself wimping out with moves like a3 or ♔h1. Therefore he decided to play something so super sharp that it would be impossible for him to bail out.

White: Joe Gallagher

Black: Alexander Shneider

Bern Open 1995

Sicilian Najdorf

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6
♙e3 e6 7 g4!?

I first came across this extremely dangerous move when I was defending the black side against my old school friend, William Watson, in the ARC Young Masters in the early eighties. I rather naively thought that the move was an outright blunder on account of the text move.

7 ... e5

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

This move not only attacks the knight on d4 but also the pawn on g4. It looks like White is in serious trouble. But looks can be deceptive!

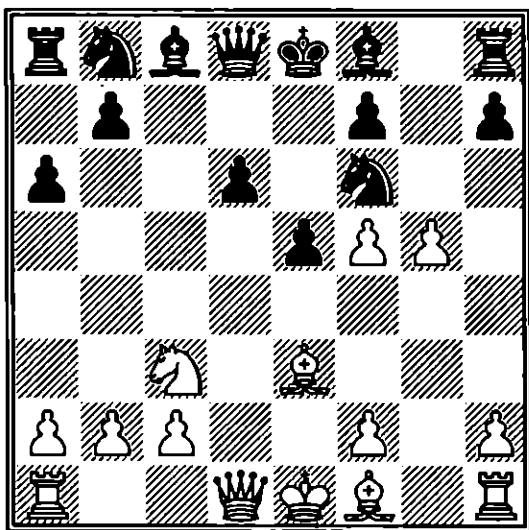
8 ♖f5 g6

At first glance this move seems overwhelming for Black as with the bishop on e3 the knight no longer has this square available to retreat to.

9 g5!

The word retreat is not in White's vocabulary!

9 ... gxf5 10 exf5!



Ouch! In my game with Willie Watson I had only considered 10 gxf6? when after 10 ... f4! 11 ♖c1 (the only move) 11 ... ♖d7 White is clearly struggling. The text, however, puts a different complexion on the situation altogether.

10 ... d5!

The best form of defence is to counterattack. Clearly knight retreats do not look too promising for Black. Old theory used to

consider this move as the refutation of this whole line but matters are never so clear, once strong creative players get to work on a position.

11 gxf6 d4 12 ♖c4!

This is a very important move. White calmly continues his development for Black cannot capture either piece on account of ♖xf7+! winning the black queen.

12 ... ♖c7

Now no less than three of White's pieces are attacked - the situation looks desperate for White.

13 ♖d3!

Joe calmly continues his development. Black now has a difficult decision as to which piece to capture.

13 ... dxe3

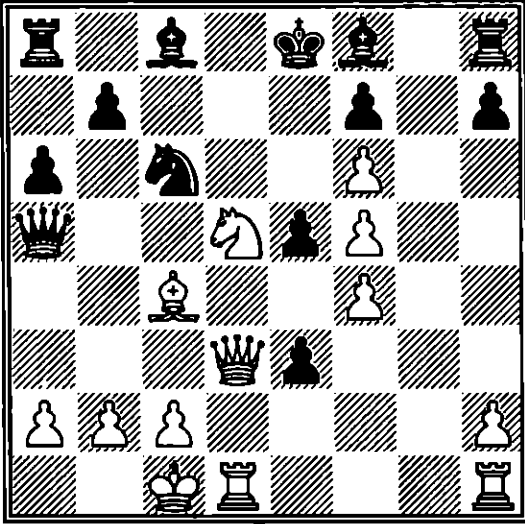
Theory still has not decided which piece should be taken; the position is simply too complicated to analyse out to a proper conclusion.

14 0-0-0!

Joe single-mindedly continues with his development. He has now fully mobilised his army, while only Black's queen has moved from its original square. But we must remember White has paid a high price for this lead in development - namely his black squared bishop.

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14 ... ♖c6 15 ♘d5 ♔a5 16 f4!



Now I will try to explain in more detail exactly where Joe's compensation is coming from.

A) His knight is beautifully centralised on d5 and is currently the best piece on the board. It is extremely hard for Black to get rid of it having no pawns to boot it on its way.

B) The bishop on c4 is also very well placed as it indirectly bears down on f7 which is traditionally the most vulnerable point in Black's position.

C) There are two open files for White's major pieces to infiltrate down. Already White has a queen and rook doubled on the d file while the rook on h1 is only one move away from occupying the open g file.

D) White's king is nicely tucked out of harms way on c1 while Black's is in the thick of the action on e8.

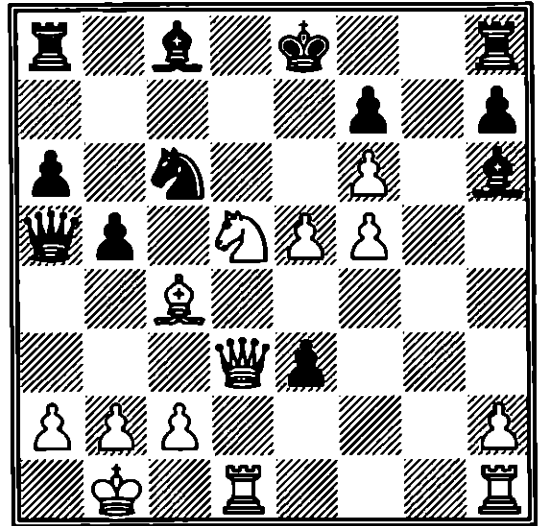
E) Finally, and most appropriately of all, Joe has the Irish

pawn centre, the tripled f pawns, which are a deadly attacking unit as they deprive the Black pieces of so many crucial squares.

16 ... ♙h6 17 ♚b1!

Joe takes a time-out to prevent any nasty accidents happening along the c1–h6 diagonal; the king also defends a2 which can be useful.

17 ... b5 18 fxe5!!



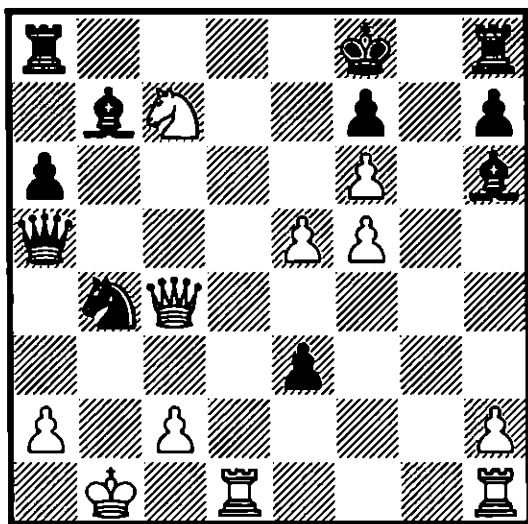
Absolutely brilliant! Joe is prepared to give up another piece to keep the momentum of the attack going.

18 ... e2

Joe's Ukrainian opponent declines the gift. I shall give you a few sample variations as to why he refused it.

A) 18 ... bxc4 (two pieces up can't be bad or can it?) 19 ♔xc4 ♙b7 20 b4 ♘xb4. Black tries to fight back but it is a gesture without punch as we shall soon see ... 21 ♘c7+ ♚f8

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2



and now in this position I found my favourite move of the book. Indeed, I was so excited that I let out a yell which did not go down very well with my neighbours as it was 3 o'clock in the morning! 22 ♖xf7+!! Did you spot it also? It is now forced mate in three moves.

B) 18 ... bxc4 19 ♖xc4 ♔b7 20 b4 20 ... ♖d8 21 e6! and I found this position impossible to defend for Black.

19 ♖xe2 ♔b7 20 ♔b3 0-0-0 21 e6!

The pawns march on - there is simply no stopping them. Black's army is pitiful to behold. The queen on a5 is symptomatic of Black's problems for there is no square for it to move without being taken.

21 ... ♖he8 22 ♖h5!

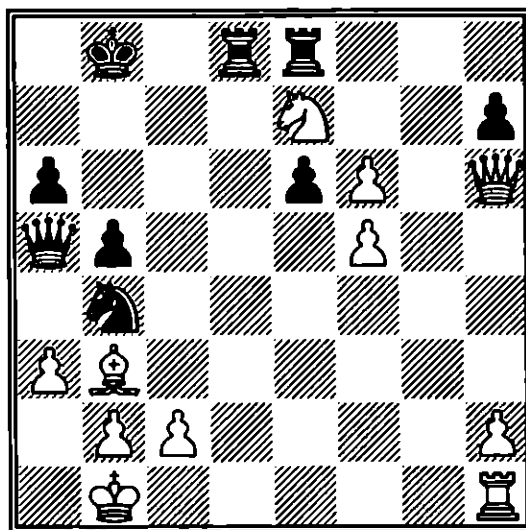
The bishop on h6 is in desperate straits also.

22 ... ♘b4 23 ♘e7+ ♔b8 24 ♖xh6

Thank you very much, that will

do nicely!

24 ... ♔xh1 25 ♖xh1 fxe6 26 a3!



What a fantastic way to finish the game - if the knight moves then a check on c6 causes a family fork. Shneider decided he had had enough punishment for one day and went off to lick his wounds.

GAME 13

In November of 1996 I played in Serbia, in a small town called Cacak. I got off to a dreadful start scoring one meagre draw and five losses in my first six games. One of the people who gave me a good hammering was the young Hungarian Grandmaster Zoltan Almasi.

I asked him, after selling him a copy of book one, if he had played any really good games which I could use for book two. He very kindly showed me

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some of his best games so that I could select one. I chose the following one as not only was it a brilliant game but it was played against one of the greatest defenders of all time, the one and only, Victor Korchnoi.

White: Zoltan Almasi
Black: Victor Korchnoi
European Club Final 1996
French Winawer

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖c3 ♗b4
4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗a5

This move had a brief spell of success but after this game it needs a serious overhaul!

6 b4 cxd4 7 ♖b5! ♗c7 8 f4
a5

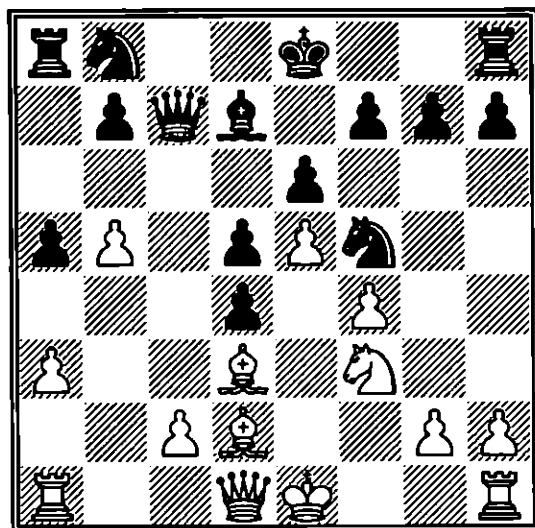
This was the new move that for a while brought this variation several impressive victories. But Zoltan seems to have found the antidote.

9 ♗d2!

This is it. This move is much stronger than 9 ♗b2 as on d2 the bishop not only controls the weakened e3 square but also keeps an eye on both sides of the board.

9 ... ♖h6 10 ♗d3 ♗d7 11
♖xc7+ ♕xc7 12 ♖f3 ♖f5
13 b5!!

It is hard to believe that one little pawn move can do so much damage.



Now Victor has the unenviable task of finding a way to develop his queen's knight. It is almost an impossible one.

13 ... ♕c5 14 ♕e2

I remember Boris Spassky once telling me half jokingly but also half seriously that e2 is nearly always the best square for the white queen - maybe he is right!

14 ... 0-0 15 a4!

Another strong move that secures the queenside. Now Zoltan can give Victor's king his undivided attention.

15 ... f6

Victor bravely opens the position knowing that his queen's knight and rook will take a long time to get into the action.

16 0-0

Zoltan's army is now fully mobilised. He is ready to begin the process of dismantling Black's kingside defences.

16 ... ♖e3

One piece is simply not enough

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

to fight a battle let alone a war.

17 ♖fe1 ♘c4 18 ♙c1!

Zoltan quite rightly chooses to keep his black squared bishop which is an excellent piece especially as Black has no opposite number to mark it.

18 ...b6

This might seem like a waste of time but it is the only way that Black can get his queen's rook into the game via a7 and then along the 7th rank.

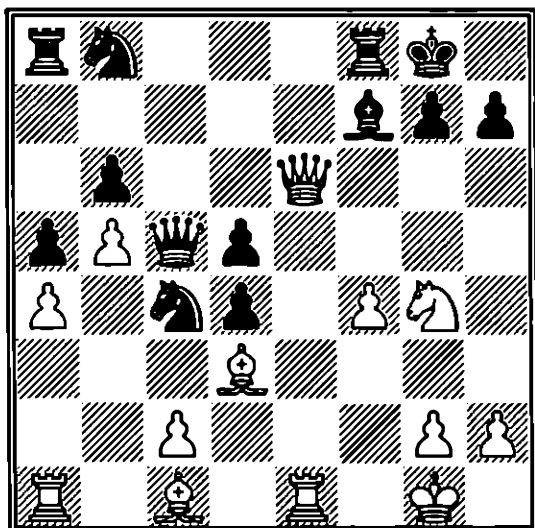
19 exf6 ♖xf6

It might seem strange that Victor relinquishes control over the e5 square but after 19 ...gxf6 20 ♗f2! ♖f7 21 ♘xd4 Black's position will quickly fall apart.

20 ♘e5 ♙e8 21 ♘g4!

Black's rook is forced to abandon the defence of the e6 pawn. Now the white pieces flood into the very heart of Black's position.

21 ...♖f8 22 ♗xe6+ ♙f7

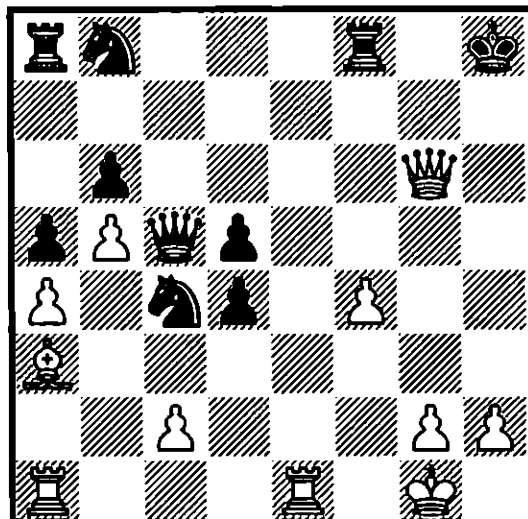


23 ♘h6+!!

With so many pieces aiming at the black king it comes as no surprise that Zoltan finds a sacrificial way to conclude his attack.

23 ...gxf6 24 ♗xh6 ♙g6 25 ♙xg6 ♖a7

This is forced. Zoltan very proudly demonstrated how he would have won against 25 ...hxg6 which was as follows 26 ♗xg6+ ♚h8 27 ♙a3!!



Black's knight is made to leave its hold over e5. 27 ...♘xa3 28 ♖e5 followed by a nasty little check on h5.

26 ♙d3

Zoltan is now a pawn up with the attack. The game is in effect over but Zoltan like all very strong players does not let up the pressure for a moment.

26 ...♖g7 27 f5!

Another powerful move. The f pawn can not only be used to harry the black pieces but it also frees a path for White's c1 bishop to join the attack.

27 ...♘d7

Finally, Victor manages to move his queen's knight but it is now too late to make any impact on the game.

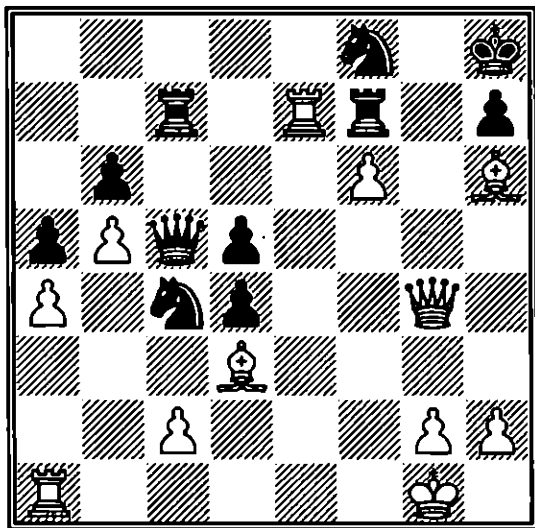
28 ♖e6+ ♜gf7 29 ♙h6 ♜c8
30 f6!

The end is near. Now 30 ♙xh7+ is threatened.

30 ...♘f8

30 ...♘xf6 is well met by 31 ♙xh7+! winning the house.

31 ♖g4+ ♔h8 32 ♜e7! ♜c7



So White to play and mate in three. Can you find the lethal continuation?

33 ♖g7+!!

Victor now resigned - it was either that or being mated as follows: 33 ... ♜xg7 34 fxg7+ ♔g8 35 gxf8♖ mate.

What really appealed to me was the way White first won the strategic battle and only then the rather one-sided tactical battle.

GAME 14

Boris Gelfand, from Belarussia, has over the last ten years consistently been one of the world's top ten players. His great technique combined with fantastic opening preparation makes him a truly fearsome opponent. The following game is a titanic encounter between two of the world's leading experts on the Grunfeld defence. Boris's mastery of the attack is a joy to behold - watch those bishops go!

White: Boris Gelfand

Black: Lubomir Ftacnik

Debrecen 1989

Exchange Grunfeld

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5
4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6
bxc3 c5 7 ♘f3 ♙g7 8 ♜b1

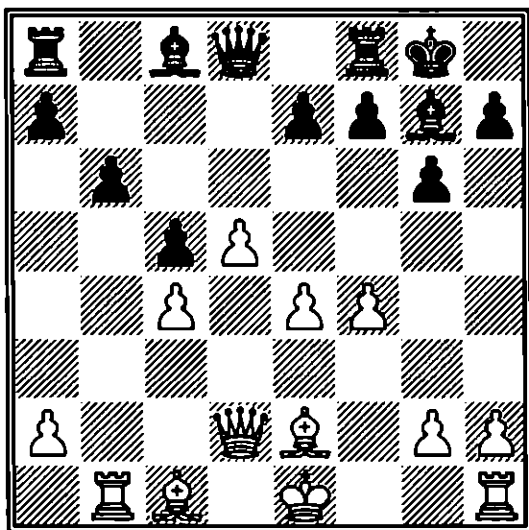
This move has caused no end of grief for Grunfeld players - Boris's record with this move is quite phenomenal, as he makes it look like almost a forced win for White!

8 ... 0-0 9 ♙e2 ♘c6 10 d5
♘e5 11 ♘xe5 ♙xe5 12
♖d2 b6 13 f4 ♙g7 14 c4

This is actually a main line position that occurs from this variation. I have to say, however, that it looks rather unpleasant for Black. White's five

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

to four pawn majority on the kingside looks a lot more relevant than Black's three to two pawn majority on the queenside.



14 ... e5 15 0-0 f5!?

Ftacnik raises the stakes - a risky decision with his queenside so undeveloped.

16 ♖b2 ♜d6 17 ♜c3!

Boris sets up a very nasty pin along the a1 - h8 diagonal.

17 ... ♜e8 18 ♖d3 ♜e7

18 ... fxe4 was to be preferred.

19 exf5 gxf5

If 19 ... e4 with a double attack on both queen and bishop, White is not losing a piece as he has this stunning riposte 20 f6!! exd3 21 fxe7! when the e pawn will decide the issue in White's favour.

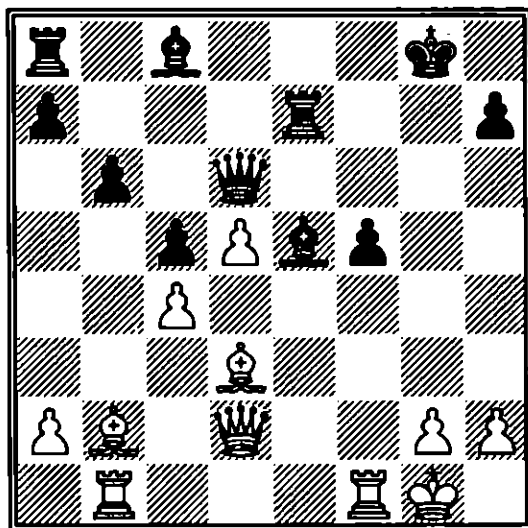
20 fxe5!

Now we see the difference - in the previous line with 18 ... fxe4 instead of 18 ... ♜e7 Black's pawn was on e4 where it was passed and supported by a rook

on e8, but in this line it remains isolated on f5 where it is simply a sitting duck on the semi-open f file.

20 ... ♖xe5 21 ♜d2!

I like this quiet move - the queen heads for g5 from where it can seriously inconvenience the black king.



21 ... ♖xe5 22 ♜h1 ♖e5 23 ♜g5+

Now the white queen comes in for the kill. Boris would have calculated the ensuing variations extremely accurately, but his intuition would have told him that Black's undeveloped pieces on a8 and c8 would gradually become more and more of a hindrance to Black's chances of conducting a successful defence.

23 ... ♜g6

Sadly for Black this is the only move.

24 ♜xe7

A rook is a rook!

24 ... ♜h6+

Non Starters

Black does get a few checks but he simply does not have enough fire-power to cause White's king too much harm.

25 ♔g1 ♚e3+

After a check by either the black bishop or queen on h2 White's king could safely run away via f2 and e2.

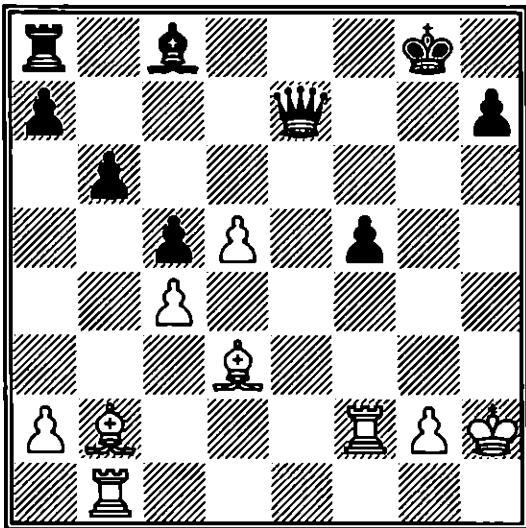
26 ♔h1

I won't comment on the standard ploy of repeating moves once to get nearer the time control (which is usually forty moves in two hours in International tournaments).

26 ... ♚h6+ 27 ♔g1 ♚e3+ 28 ♖f2! ♗h2+!

Lubomir would have been banking on this move to save the day.

29 ♔xh2 ♚xe7



It is now time to take a closer look at the position: White is slightly down on material but his two rooks and two bishops now commence a devastating joint

attack against the black king. White's bishop on b2 is an absolute monster - it is easily worth more than a mere three points! Black's queen is simply helpless against the marauding White army.

30 ♖f3! ♚d6+ 31 ♖g3+!

I love it! Boris blocks a check by delivering one of his own.

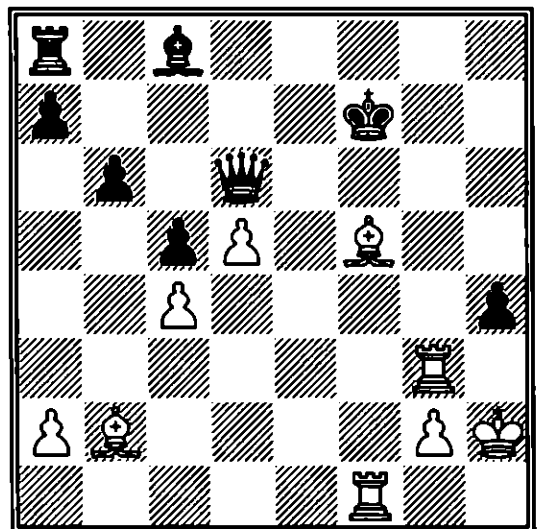
31 ... ♔f7 32 ♖f1!

Classic attacking strategy - Boris brings up the last of his reserves to add weight to the knock-out punch.

32 ... h5!

Lubomir fights fire with fire by creating threats of his own, but with two of his pieces still firmly on their original squares, he is trying to fight a boxing match with one arm tied behind his back!

33 ♗xf5! h4



What's this! Has Boris just blundered a rook?

34 ♗g6+!

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Do not fear, for he has everything under control as the rest of his moves are either made with check or the ultra powerful double check.

34 ... ♔g8

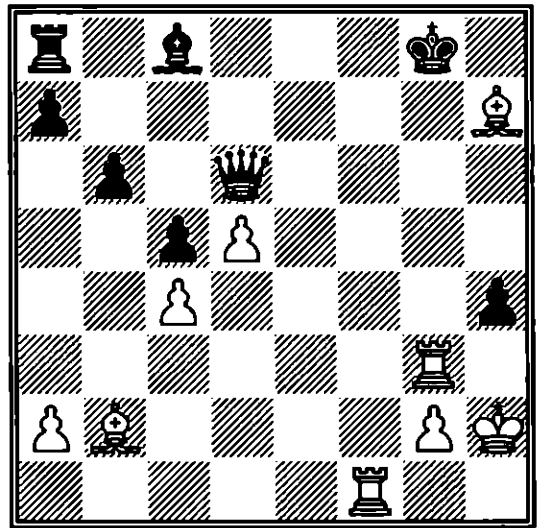
The stats box shows that it does not look good for Black as his king is now locked in a cage from which there is no escape.

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♖ ♗ ♘ ♙		4
Defence	♔ ♚	♜	2½

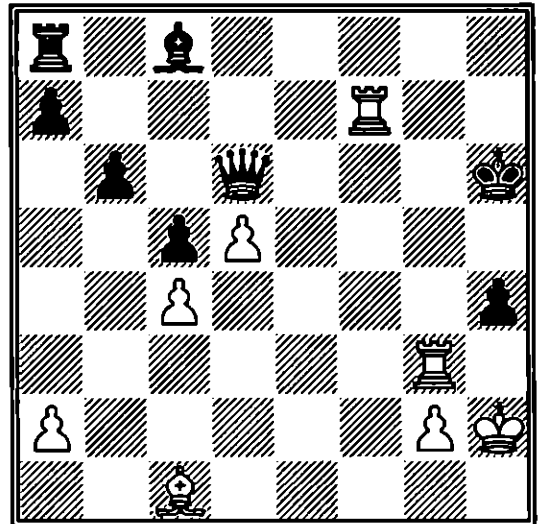
If he had tried to run with 34 ... ♖e7 then 35 ♜f6+! would pick up the h pawn with a crushing attack.

35 ♜h7+!

Boris plays a move of rare beauty. The bishop is jettisoned in order to bring the rook on f1 into the fray.



35 ... ♔xh7 36 ♜f7+ ♔h6 37 ♜c1+!



The deadly switchback forces resignation as after 37 ♜c1+ ♖h5 38 ♜h7+ it is mate next move. What a finish!

4 KINGS ON OPPOSING WINGS

When kings are castled on opposite sides of the board there is usually a buzz of excitement as both players strive for the initiative - the play is sharper, tenser and more high risk. There is less time to dawdle, speed is of the essence.

Often the plans are much more straightforward - attack your opponent's king with gusto. But the real key to playing these positions is doing that while defending your own king. It is a difficult but rewarding balancing act that is required.

GAME 15

At the end of 1993 the P.C.A (I think it stood for Professional Chess Association although I wouldn't bet on it!) held its own version of a World Championship qualifier (outside F.I.D.E.) in Groningen.

It was a great tournament in which most of the world's leading players took part. It holds mixed memories for me as I came within inches of qualifying for the knockout stage only to lose an amazing game with

Sergei Tiviakov in the penultimate round.

There was, however, one game which always brings a smile to my face for reasons that will become apparent later...

White: Kiril Georgiev
Black: Michael Adams
Groningen P.C.A. 1993
Caro Kann 4 ... ♖d7

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4
 4 ♘xe4 ♘d7 5 ♙c4 ♘gf6 6
 ♘g5 e6 7 ♚e2 ♖b6 8 ♙d3
 h6 9 ♘5f3 c5 10 dxc5 ♙xc5

So far so good. White would now normally play 11 ♘e5 followed by developing the other knight to f3. Kiril, however, had an another idea.

11 ♙d2!?

Now it is the time to reveal why I so enjoyed this game. About five years before William Watson (a fellow Grandmaster and old school friend) and I played in a round robin in Iceland. On the rest day Willie rushed into my room in a dreadful panic exclaiming that he had found the refutation of the Caro Kann defence (which was at the time

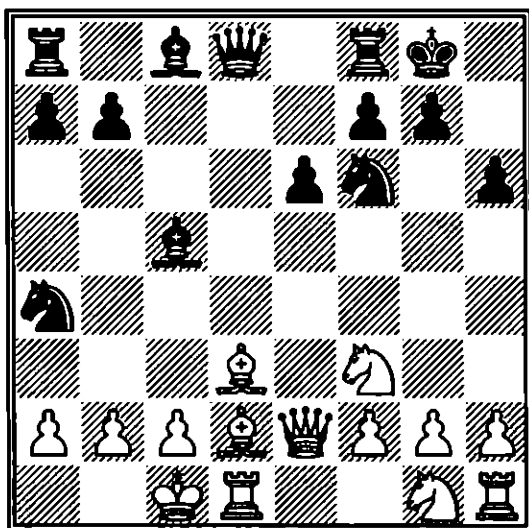
ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

his main line defence to 1 e4). I asked him what it was, to which he replied by setting up this position on a chess set and banging out 11 ♖d2. I remember thinking "Is that it? What's the point?" I asked "What would happen if I simply castled?" Well, that was exactly what Micky played.

11 ... 0-0 12 0-0-0

This was Willie's idea. He thought White had a dangerous initiative due to the pressure down the d file. It did not take us long to find the move that dramatically changes the assessment of the position.

12 ... ♞a4!



Micky played this move immediately which must have had a rather demoralising effect on his opponent. Some of you may be wondering if I had told Micky about this or was it just a coincidence that we both thought of identical ways of dealing with 11 ♖d2. In fact Micky had learnt about this conversation all those

years ago, from another English Grandmaster, Jon Speelman, via William Watson.

13 ♖b5

This was the move that Willie and I had spent most of the day analysing. White must react quickly because 13 ... ♜b6 targeting b2 is a huge threat.

13 ... ♖d7 14 ♖xd7

14 ♖xa4 was the move that had grabbed our attention five years earlier. It looks as if White is winning a piece after 14 ... ♖xa4 15 ♜c4 forking the two bishops but then Black can reply 15 ... ♜e8!! 16 ♜xc5 ♜c8 with tremendous pressure for the piece.

14 ... ♜xd7 15 ♞h3

Around this stage Kiril offered a draw which Micky politely declined. White's king on c1 is simply too much of a temptation.

15 ... ♜ac8!

The rest of the game is poetry in motion. I still can't quite believe how quickly Micky builds up his attack.

16 ♔b1

16 ♖xh6 is too optimistic on account of the simple 16 ... ♜c6 17 ♖e3 ♜b6! when White's king is in for a rough ride.

16 ... ♜c6 17 ♖c1 ♞d5!

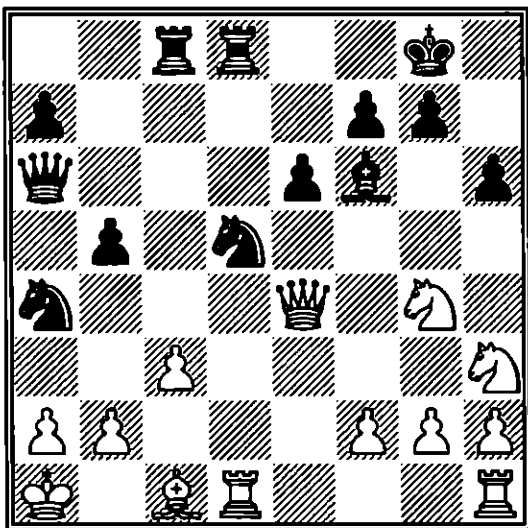
Another powerful move which threatens a devastating check on c3.

Kings on Opposing Wings

18 ♖c4 ♜fd8 19 ♔a1 b5 20 ♜e4 ♙e7!

Micky retreats the bishop to clear the c file and place it on the long a1–h8 diagonal from where it eyes White's king on a1.

21 c3 ♜a6 22 ♞e5 ♙f6 23 ♞g4



Black has reached a dream position with every single one of his pieces attacking and he has a little pawn on b5 to blow apart White's defences if needed.

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♜ ♞ ♞ ♙ ♞ ♞ ♙	♔	6½
Defence	♔ ♜ ♞ ♙		4

23 ... ♞axc3!

The end draws near - in such positions there are all sorts of combinational possibilities that are in the offing.

24 bxc3

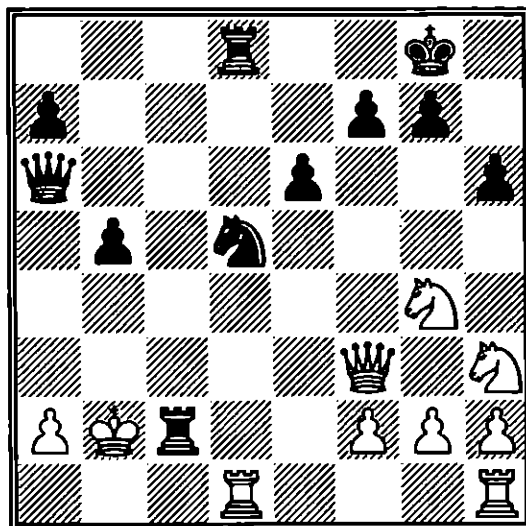
If 24 ♞xf6+ ♞xf6 White's queen is very cleverly attacked by both black knights. I can't recall ever

seeing such a motif before.

24 ... ♙xc3+ 25 ♙b2 ♜c4!

The rook drives away White's one and only decent defender.

26 ♜f3 ♙xb2+ 27 ♔xb2 ♜c2+!!



It's one hammer blow after another. White's two knights and rook on h1 are now looking distinctly sorry for themselves.

28 ♔xc2 ♜xa2+ 29 ♔d3 ♜c4+!

Micky is precise to the end. Kiril not unsurprisingly decided to call it a day. It is mate after:

A) 30 ♙d2 ♞b4+ 31 ♙e3 ♞c2 mate.

B) 30 ♙d2 ♞b4+ 31 ♙e1 ♞c2 mate.

GAME 16

Every couple of years or so there is normally one up and coming very talented junior who

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

makes it through to the very highest echelons of world chess.

In 1992 at the Manila Olympiad a then very young Russian by the name of Vladimir Kramnik burst onto the chess scene in a blaze of glory. Vladimir won the gold medal for board four for the Russian team by scoring an amazing $8\frac{1}{2}/9$. From that moment on he has only gone from strength to strength. Now he is generally considered to be one of the top three players in the world. Unlike many of the players who reach the pinnacle of world chess he is extremely easy going and friendly - indeed, he would make a very popular World Champion.

His chess itself is rather unusual in that with White he is prepared to grind out a slight advantage for as long as it takes to acquire the whole point. However, when he has Black he becomes a different animal entirely. He plays high risk, uncompromising chess where no quarter is given - the following game is one such example.

White: Boris Gelfand

Black: Vladimir Kramnik

European Team Cup 1996

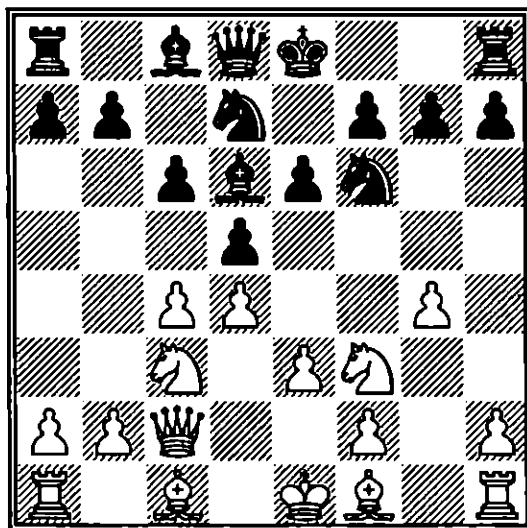
Semi-Slav

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6
4 ♘f3 e6 5 e3 ♘bd7 6 ♚c2

♙d6

This position in the Semi-Slav has been reached literally thousands of times. Indeed this is Anatoly Karpov's favoured way of meeting the Semi-Slav. He would now play the solid ♙e2 or ♙d3 but I'm sure that not even in his wildest dreams would he have considered the following move.

7 g4!?



An incredible idea: White lunges out with his g pawn with the king still in the centre and both the rooks and bishops still at home. It will come as no surprise to the reader when I tell you that it was first played by the highly creative Latvian Grandmaster Alexei Shirov in 1992. For a few months the Black players of this opening were quaking in their boots with fear but time has shown the way for Black to play. Kramnik uses the standard recipe of meeting a flank attack with play in the centre. I should just add,

Kings on Opposing Wings

that if White's attack does not come off, then he will be saddled with long term weaknesses on the kingside.

7 ... ♖b4!

Kramnik realises that the loss of a tempo is irrelevant because White's seventh move has so radically changed the fundamental nature of the position.

8 ♖d2 ♜e7 9 a3

In time Gelfand will come to regret this move. I shall try to explain why:

A) It is highly unlikely that White will want to put his king on the kingside having ruptured his kingside pawn structure.

B) The centre is a dangerous place to leave the king - as then it can be attacked from all sides.

C) Therefore the king will probably end up on the queenside where the pawn on a3 will considerably speed up Black's ability to open lines against the white king. Also the b3 square is irrevocably weakened.

9 ... ♖xc3 10 ♖xc3 b6!

Note how Kramnik is in no hurry to commit his king. Instead he completes his queenside development and awaits White's intentions.

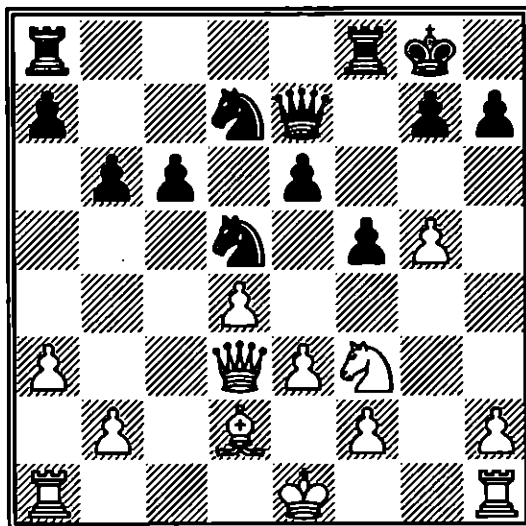
11 ♖d3 ♖a6

Kramnik increases the pressure against White's centre; the pawn on g4 is becoming more and more of a liability.

**12 ♜a4 dxc4 13 ♜xa6 cxd3
14 ♜xd3 0-0 15 g5 ♘d5 16
♖d2**

It seems a shame to retreat the bishop but after 16 e4 ♘xc3 17 ♜xc3 Black can gain the upper hand by immediately striking at the centre with 17 ... c5!

16 ... f5!!



One of the star moves of the game. Kramnik cements his well centralised knight on d5 by preventing Boris from playing e4. But the real reason I like this move so much is because the move that White would want to play, 17 gxf6 (en passant), is not playable on account of 17 ... ♜xf6 when the pressure down the f file is just too much.

17 0-0-0

Boris would not have been very happy about castling on the queenside when he has already played the weakening a3, but there is nowhere else for his king to go. He must have been wishing by now that his g5 pawn

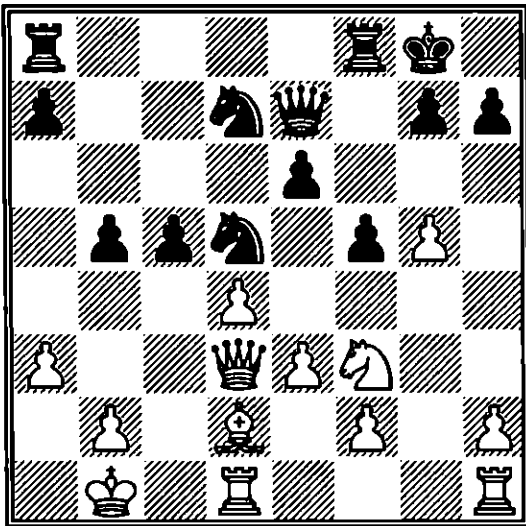
ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

was back on g2. That is one of the big problems with advancing pawns - they just can never go backwards to cover all the weak holes that they have created.

17 ... c5!

Vladimir plays the next stage of the game with great energy.

18 ♖b1 b5!!



Vladimir is quite prepared to give up his pawns on the queenside in order to open files for his rooks. White's king on b1 is a sitting target.

19 ♚xb5

More or less forced as Black was threatening 19 ... c4 followed by a5 and b4 with an overwhelming position.

19 ... ♖ab8 20 ♚a5 ♖b3!

The rook comes in. Now we see how the a3 move is being exploited by Kramnik.

21 ♚a2 ♖fb8 22 ♖b1 e5!!

Another fine move - the a2-g8 diagonal is now accessible to the black queen. When her

majesty herself starts to play a role in the attack on top of all the other pieces then White really does have problems.

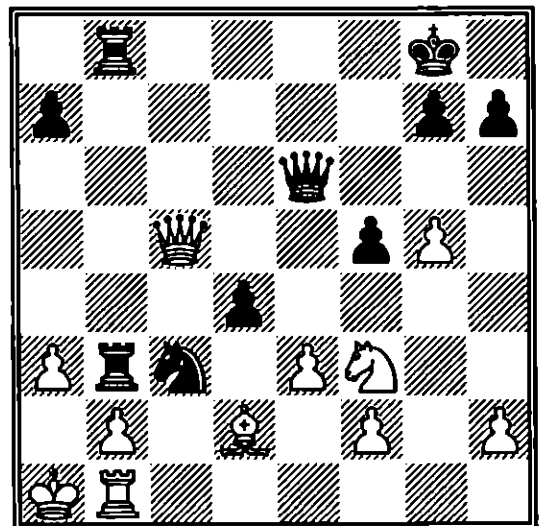
**23 ♖hc1 ♚e6 24 ♚a1 exd4
25 ♖xc5**

Pure desperation but everything else is just as hopeless. It took me a long time to notice that White could not capture the pawn on d4 with 25 exd4? because then the black rook on b3 would change direction and pick off White's knight on f3.

25 ... ♞xc5 26 ♚xc5

At a glance it might look like Boris is surviving as he is only an exchange for a pawn down and 26 ♞xd4 is on the cards but Vladimir has seen an exquisite way to conclude the game.

26 ... ♞c3!!



This move leaves me speechless - Chess can be such a beautiful game!

27 ♞xd4

Black to play and win: his

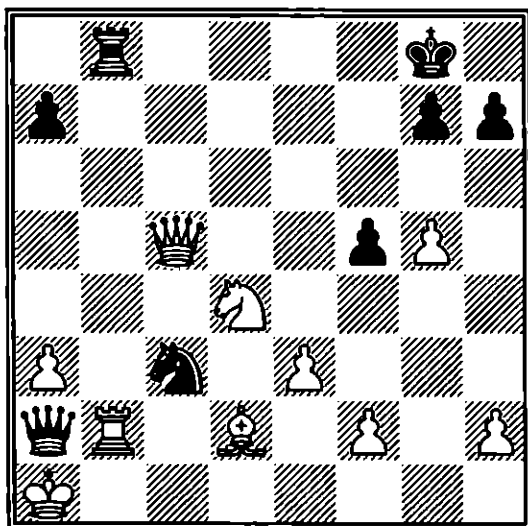
Kings on Opposing Wings

queen, rook and knight are all hanging. It had better be good!

27 ... ♖xb2!!

Have you seen the idea yet?

28 ♖xb2 ♕a2+!!



There is a part of me that likes to think that Vladimir had been inspired by my brilliant win against Lembit Oll (Game 25 of book 1) which used an almost identical theme, but I suspect it is only wishful thinking!

Boris now resigned because it is mate next move.

GAME 17

Game 16 saw a crushing victory for the young Russian maestro Vladimir Kramnik. However, the next game shows that the world's elite do not always have things their own way. This time Vladimir is comprehensively outplayed from start to finish by the even younger Hungarian Peter

Leko. For someone so young, Peter's understanding of chess is quite phenomenal. Let's see how he ties up Vladimir hand and foot. You, the reader, should make the most of this as you won't see it happen too often!

White: Peter Leko
Black: Vladimir Kramnik
Belgrade 1995
Sicilian Richter-Rauzer

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♙g5 e6 7 ♕d2 ♙e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 f4 h6

As a very general rule it is always risky to advance pawns in front of your king especially when the kings are castled on opposite sides of the board.

10 ♙h4 ♕b6 11 ♘xc6!

This is a new idea which casts a serious shadow over the whole variation for Black. Before this game White had only played 11 ♘f3.

11 ...bxc6 12 e5 dxe5 13 fxe5 ♘e4

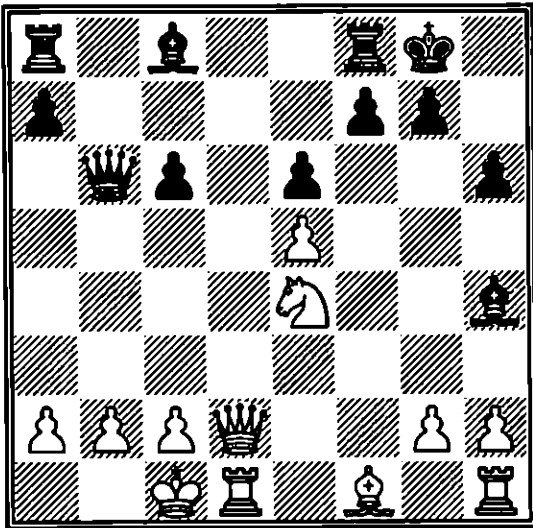
This is the only way for Black to avoid losing a piece.

14 ♘xe4 ♙xh4

It's time to take stock: Black has the two bishops but White's beautifully centralised knight on e4 easily counteracts this slight disadvantage. On top of that Black's bishop on c8 is by far

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

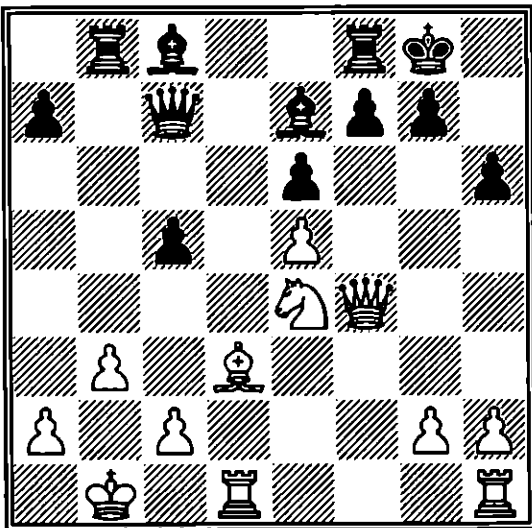
the worst minor piece on the board.



**15 ♖f4 ♔e7 16 ♔d3 ♜b8
17 b3 ♜c7 18 ♔b1!**

A quiet move that is typical of Peter's style. He secures the position of his king before continuing with his attack. Now he no longer has to worry about Black playing ♔g5.

18 ...c5



19 ♞f6+!

Peter lands a big one, but he would have had to accurately calculate the variations if Kramnik had captured the knight.

19 ...♔h8

It is a bad sign for Black if he has to let the white knight on f6 stay. However, if he had played:
A) 19 ...gxf6 then 20 ♜xh6 f5 21 g4! is winning for White because the g file will be opened up for the white rooks.

B) 19 ...♔xf6 is well met by **20 ♜e4!** when we see the point of Peter's 18th move - **20 ... ♔g5** is no longer check.

20 ♜e4 g6

This is forced but now the knight on f6 is there to stay.

21 h4 ♔b7 22 ♜f4 ♔g7 23 ♞g4!

I like it. Peter probes for further weaknesses. There is no satisfactory way for Vladimir to defend the h6 pawn.

23 ...♜h8

It is an awful waste of a rook for it to be used to guard a mere pawn but against the only other alternative **23 ... g5** Peter had planned a stunning queen sacrifice commencing with **24 hxg5 ♔xg5 25 ♜f6+!!** which would lead to forced mate in another eight moves! That's a challenge for some of you to find.

Good Luck!

24 ♜df1!

Another good move that exploits the fact that Black's king's rook has been lured away from the defence of the f pawn.

Kings on Opposing Wings

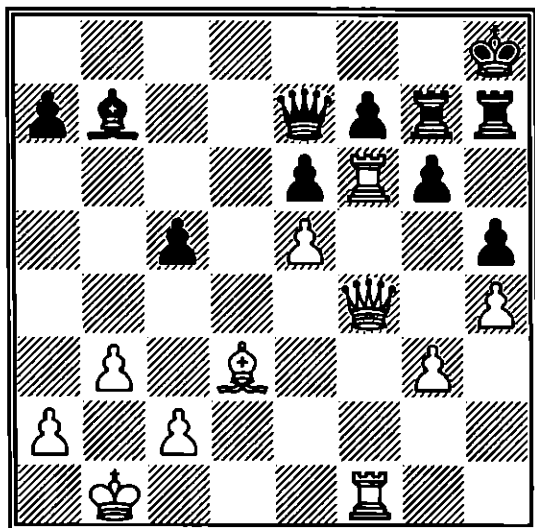
24 ...♖bf8

Sad but true: Vladimir is forced to use his other rook for the sole purpose of defending another pawn. Now he has very little chance of organising any counterplay against the white king which is hidden away on the queenside.

25 ♖f6 ♕d8

The greedy 25 ... ♙xg2? would lose to 26 ♜e8+!! winning the queen.

26 ♕g3 h5 27 ♕g5 ♖h7 28 ♖f4 ♙h8 29 ♖hf1 ♙xf6 30 ♖xf6 ♖g8 31 g3 ♕e7 32 ♕f4 ♖gg7



The last few moves have seen Peter gradually increase the pressure as he ties down the black pieces to the defence of their king and also to the f7 pawn. The rest of the game is highly instructive. Many players would be tempted to find a way to checkmate the black king but that is not so easy as Black has

a lot of pieces defending it. The key to winning this type of position is to switch the point of attack to the queenside where it will be extremely difficult for Vladimir to get his rooks into play. Peter, therefore, uses the extra manoeuvrability of his pieces to the maximum effect by ganging up on Black's weak queenside pawns.

33 ♖f2

Peter is in absolutely no hurry to put Vladimir out of his misery. There is no constructive plan for Black to undertake.

33 ...♙d5 34 ♙b2 ♙c6 35 ♙c4 ♙b7 36 ♖d2!

Another good move. The white rook prepares to infiltrate down the open d file.

36 ...♖g8 37 ♖d6 ♕e8 38 ♕f2!

Now the pawns start to fall. Vladimir can only sit back and let it happen.

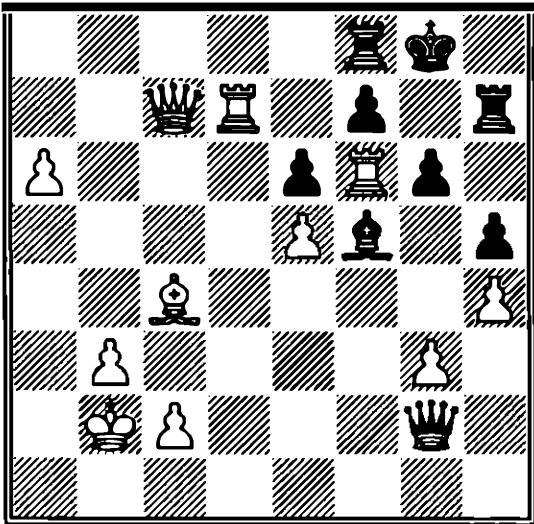
38 ...♙e4 39 ♕xc5 ♕e7 40 ♕d4 ♙f5 41 ♖d7 ♕e8 42 ♕xa7

Another one bites the dust. Peter now has three connected passed pawns to queen at his leisure while Vladimir is still tied down to the defence of the f7 pawn!

42 ...♖f8 43 a4

Four moves to touchdown...

43 ...♔g8 44 a5 ♜c8 45 a6
 ♜c6 46 ♜c7 ♜g2



47 ♕xe6!

A fitting finale to a glorious game.

47 ...♕xe6 48 ♖xe6

And that was that. There is no way for Vladimir to halt the on-ward march of White's a pawn.

GAME 18

Chris Ward played some quite outstanding chess to become the 1996 British Champion with an impressive 9/11. As the commentator and lecturer of the event I was ideally placed to witness at first hand how Chris plays the game as I think it should be played - aggressive, uncompromising and most importantly of all to win with both White AND Black.

Let me take you back five years and show a game where Chris

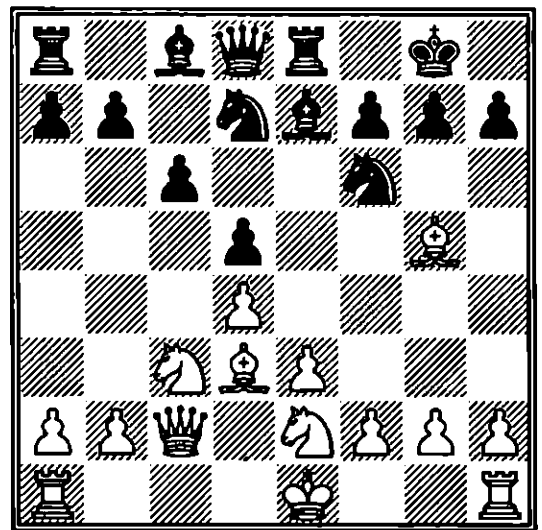
provides a perfect display of how to handle the white side of the Queen's Gambit Exchange variation against one of England's strongest and most talented juniors, Jonathan Parker.

White: Chris Ward

Black: Jonathan Parker
Guildford 1991

Queen's Gambit Exchange

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6
 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗g5 ♗e7 6
 e3 c6 7 ♗d3 ♞bd7 8 ♜c2
 0-0 9 ♞ge2 ♝e8



This is one of the key positions of the Exchange Variation. There are three basic ways that White can play this position:

A) Castle kingside and play for a minority attack with b4 and b5 undermining Black's queenside pawn formation.

B) Castle kingside and then play for a central breakthrough with f3 and e4 - this idea was championed by none other than

Kings on Opposing Wings

Gary Kasparov.

C) The most risky of all. Castle queenside and follow up with a kingside pawn storm to cause the black king as much distress as possible!

No prizes for guessing which plan Chris chose!

10 0-0-0!

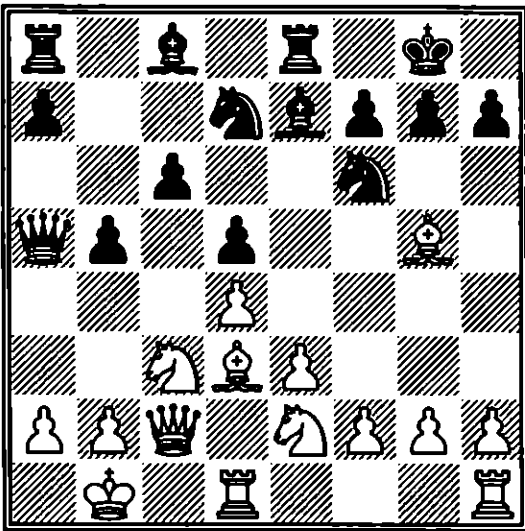
Let's go for it!

10 ... ♚a5 11 ♔b1!

Chris rightly takes a time-out to secure the position of his own king before launching out at his opponent's. As an added bonus the c1 square is freed for White's other pieces (usually a rook) to use.

When both sides have castled on opposite wings it is essential to be able to combine defence with attack - an art that takes time and patience to master.

11 ... b5?!



Optically this move looks impressive but it does have one serious drawback of leaving the

c6 pawn backward on a semi-open c file. Chris now exploits this factor to perfection.

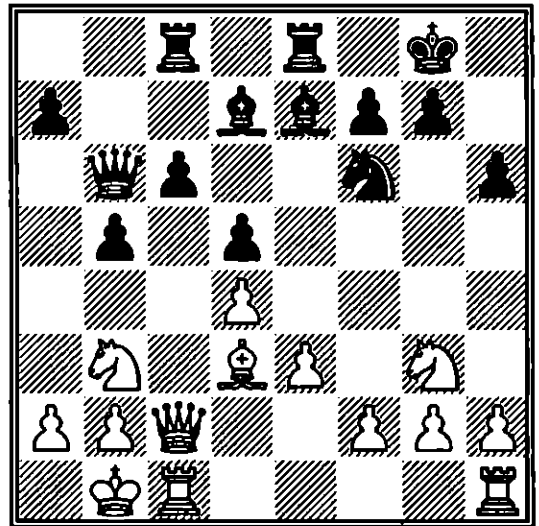
12 ♖g3 h6?!

It is always (this point just can't be emphasised enough) extremely risky to advance pawns in front of your own king when the kings are placed on opposite sides of the board. This can seriously aid your opponent's attack.

13 ♙xf6 ♘xf6 14 ♘ce2!

One of Chris's best moves of the game. The knight heads for b3 from where it is perfectly placed to hold up Black's queenside play.

14 ... ♙d7 15 ♘c1 ♖ac8 16 ♘b3 ♚b6 17 ♖c1!



Now we can see exactly why Black's 11th move was a little hasty. Rather than attacking on the queenside, Black is being forced to defend there instead!

17 ... ♙e6 18 ♘c5 ♘d7

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

19 ♖xe6!

The opposite coloured bishops will dramatically increase the power of White's attack: just look at that b1–h7 diagonal.

19 ... fxe6 20 ♕e2 ♖f6 21 ♖h5!

Chris removes Black's best defender which is the knight on f6.

21 ... b4 22 h4!

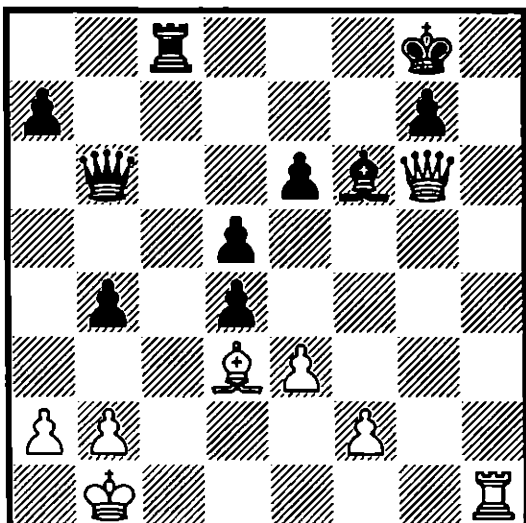
Now it's White's turn to hurl his own pawns against Black's kingside defences.

22 ... c5 23 ♖xf6+ ♕xf6 24 g4!

Now we can see why the pawn on h6 is such a liability for Black. After White plays g5 the kingside will be blown wide open.

24 ... c4

The alternative 24 ... cxd4 fares no better on account of the following variation: 25 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 26 g5! It just had to be played. 26 ... hxg5 27 hxg5 (Now the h file is opened.) 27 ... ♕xg5 28 ♕g4! ♕f6 29 ♕g6!!



with the devastating threat of 30 ♖h8+! followed by mate on h7.

25 ♕g6 ♖ed8 26 g5 hxg5 27 hxg5 ♕xg5 28 ♖cg1

Chris has managed in no time at all to line up a queen, two rooks and a bishop at one juicy target, the KING on g8. The end is swift...

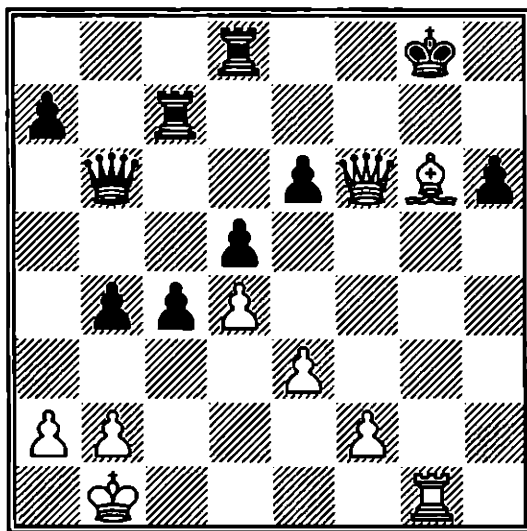
28 ... ♕h6

The alternative 28 ... ♕f6 would have lost to the brilliant 29 ♖h8+!! ♖xh8 30 ♕f7! when there will be no escape for the unhappy black king.

29 ♖xh6!

This would have been one of the easier sacrifices that Chris has had to find in his chess career.

29 ... gxh6 30 ♕f3 ♖c7 31 ♕f6!



Jonathan resigned - it is mate in two against all defences - I won't spoil your fun by giving any of the variations.

5 SWINGING ROOKS

Rooks are powerful pieces yet it is so easy to simply forget about them until the endgame. However, they are great for adding additional punch to a middle-game attack.

Watch these rooks in action as they swing off that boring back rank; they are not going to be prevented from joining the fight by a wall of pawns in front of them.

GAME 19

At the end of 1996 there took place the strongest tournament of all time in Las Palmas, Spain. The tournament was a mind-boggling category 21 with an average ELO of 2757. Vasily Ivanchuk was the lowest rated player at a paltry 2730!

The following game between Viswanathan Anand and Anatoly Karpov really stood out from all the others. Anand simply went all out for victory and destroyed one of the greatest players of all time, the mighty Anatoly Karpov. Anand is a truly awesome player - the speed which he can calculate variations is simply

staggering. This ability combined with wonderful intuition and a photographic memory makes him one of the most feared opponents in the world.

White: Viswanathan Anand
Black: Anatoly Karpov
Las Palmas 1996
Queen's Gambit Declined

**1 ♖f3 d5 2 d4 e6 3 c4 dxc4
 4 e4 b5 5 a4 c6 6 axb5
 cxb5 7 b3!**

This is a standard method for White to regain the pawn on c4.

**7 ... ♗b7 8 bxc4 ♗xe4 9
 cxb5 ♖f6 10 ♗e2 ♗e7 11 0-0
 0-0 12 ♖c3**

Such moves are always enjoyable to play - Anand develops a piece while gaining time by attacking the bishop on e4.

12 ... ♗b7 13 ♖e5!

This is a lovely outpost for the knight. The knight is not only supported by the d4 pawn but also threatens to jump in on c6 or help out in an attack on the black king.

13 ... a6

Anatoly has to somehow break

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

the bind on the queenside.

14 ♖f3

This bishop has a bright future - firstly it probes Black's white-squared weaknesses on the queenside...

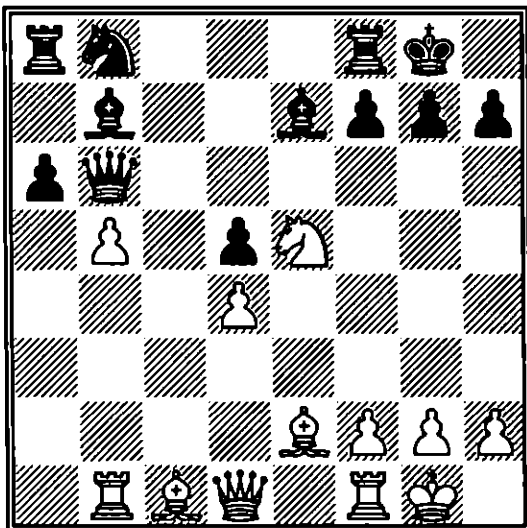
14 ... ♘d5 15 ♘xd5 exd5

This recapture looks very anti-positional: the activity of the bishop on b7 is severely reduced while the d5 pawn has become isolated. I would have tried 15 ... ♗xd5 and hoped for the best although I am not sure this approach really works at their level!

16 ♖b1!

A far from obvious move but Anand reasons that his queen's rook has more prospects than its counterpart on a8. Already Anand would have been thinking in terms of a kingside attack.

16 ... ♕b6 17 ♗e2!!



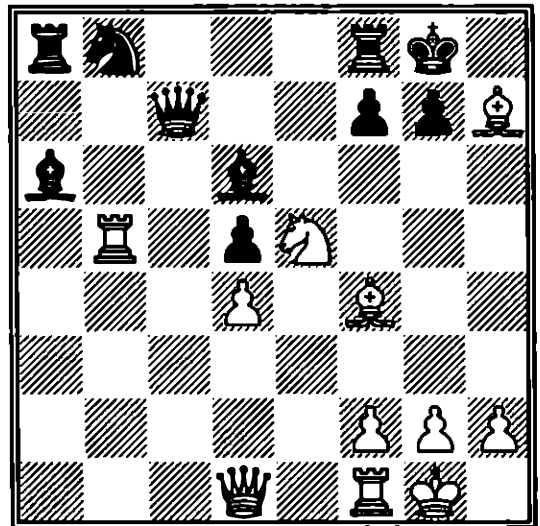
For me this was Anand's best move of the game for the simple reason that hardly anyone

else would have even thought of it! On f3 it looks like the bishop is doing a great job pressurising the d5 pawn but Anand decides to reroute it to a more potent attacking diagonal - a remarkable concept.

17 ... axb5 18 ♖xb5 ♕c7 19 ♗f4 ♗d6 20 ♗d3!

Now we see the idea. Anand is lining up to land the big one against Anatoly's king.

20 ... ♗a6 21 ♗xh7+!!



Well what can I say? There was a pawn for the taking on d5 but Anand like a true hero goes for glory. I doubt that he would have seen all the possible variations as there are simply too many to calculate (even for Deeper Blue!) but his gut feeling would have told him that he had enough pieces attacking to pull through.

21 ... ♔xh7 22 ♕h5+ ♔g8 23 ♖b3!

This is the real point behind Vishy's brave 21st move. The

Swinging Rooks

rook provides the required added firepower as it prepares to swing across the third rank to either g3 or h3. The "swinging rook" has played a key role in literally thousands of successful attacks over the last millennium.

23 ... ♖xe5

Karpov, desperately short of time, panics and decides to remove the irritating knight on e5. It would have come as little consolation for him to know that he was probably losing in all variations.

24 ♖h3!

An extremely important zwischenzug. The obvious and impulsive 24 ♖xe5?? would be a terrible blunder on account of 24 ... ♜c4 25 ♖h3 ♜xf1 mate Ouch!

24 ... f6 25 dxe5

This pawn becomes an attacking unit in its own right - it threatens to advance to e6 when mate on either h7 or h8 is inevitable.

25 ... ♜e7 26 ♜h7+ ♔f7 27 ♖g3 ♔e8 28 ♖xg7 ♜e6 29 exf6!

The pawn continues its magnificent crusade. The rest of the game is just a mopping up operation. White has three pawns for a piece with a huge attack.

29 ... ♘c6

At last but it is too little too late!

30 ♖a1!

White's final piece joins the fray.

30 ... ♔d8 31 h4!

Not only making a luft for the king but also preparing to queen the h pawn!

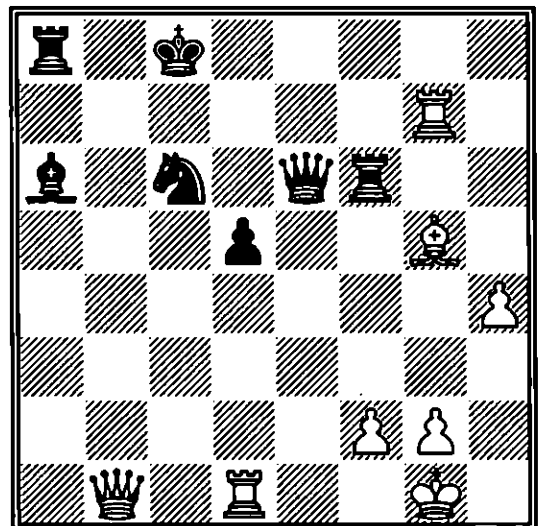
31 ... ♖b7 32 ♖c1 ♖a6 33 ♖a1 ♖b7 34 ♖d1 ♖a6 35 ♜b1

Now White's queen switches over to the queenside and heads for b6.

35 ... ♖xf6 36 ♖g5!

PIN and WIN

36 ... ♔c8



On making this move Anatoly was put out of his misery as his flag fell. Anand would have been spoilt for choice if the game had continued although according to my computer (Fritz 4) White would be 4.96 points up (about a rook) after 37 ♜h7! when carnage ensues from all angles.

GAME 20

One of the highlights of any chess olympiad has to be the famous (or perhaps infamous?) Bermuda Party, which has become over the years something of an institution. It is a chance to witness many of the world's top Grandmasters attempting the latest dance craze (not always a pretty sight!).

So when I heard that for the last few years there had been a lovely tournament in the dream setting of Bermuda, I accepted an invitation like a shot. The annual Open takes place in February when the rest of the world is freezing but Bermuda is still a balmy 65 degrees.

I was so inspired by the general ambience that I scored in the preceding grandmaster tournament a scorching 8½/10. Running along side this event was another round robin tournament for players to make international master norms. It was here that I met the charming and charismatic Jacques Elbilia, who happens to be one of Africa's leading players. Normally he is a solid positional player. But then he read ATTACK 1 and went on to produce this brilliancy in the open tournament that followed against one of America's leading juniors, Dean Ippolito.

White: Jacques Elbilia

Black: Dean Ippolito

Bermuda Open 1997

Trompovsky (well sort of!)

1 d4 d5 2 ♖g5

Yes, I was responsible for his choice of opening. On the motorbike ride into the tournament we did a quick spot of preparation.

2 ... h6 3 ♗h4 c5 4 dxc5!

Jacques was soon into the spirit of the opening. There is no easy way for Black to win the pawn back.

4 ... ♕a5+ 5 ♘c3 ♕b4!?

I don't really like this move but 5 ... e6 is well met by 6 e4!

6 ♘f3 e6 7 ♖b1 ♘c6 8 e3 ♗xc5

So finally Black manages to win the pawn back but there has been a price to pay. He is now seriously behind in development with the queen horribly misplaced on b4.

9 ♗d3 a6?

After this time wasting error Black's position is on the edge of the abyss. I would have played 9 ... ♕a5 like a shot.

10 a3 ♕a5 11 b4! ♘xb4

This is forced as 11 ... ♕xa3 is met by 12 ♖b3! winning the bishop on c5.

Swinging Rooks

**12 axb4 ♖xb4 13 ♜xb4!
♚xb4 14 ♚d2**

White is slightly down on material but his lead in development and active pieces easily make up for this.

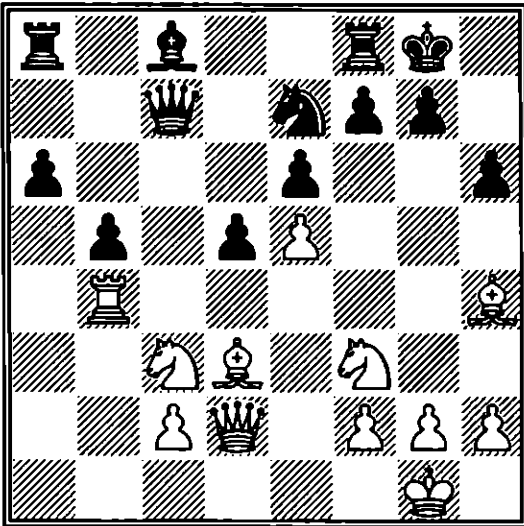
**14 ... ♘e7 15 0-0 0-0 16
♜b1**

Yet again Dean has to spend more time moving his unhappy queen.

16 ... ♚d6 17 e4!

This is a key move. It is very rare that pieces alone are enough to decide the issue; pawns play a crucial role in opening up a way through.

17 ... b5 18 e5 ♚c7 19 ♜b4!!



This is my favourite move of the game. Jacques boldly brings his rook into the action by preparing to swing it across the fourth rank. Black is now helpless against the additional threats that this rook will create.

19 ... d4 20 ♜xd4 ♖b7 21

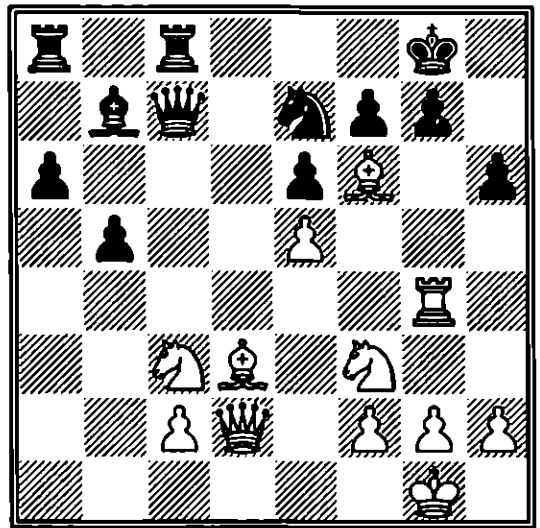
♖f6!!

This move is in keeping with Jacques's preceding play although the prosaic 21 ♖d7! would have been equally effective.

21 ... ♜fc8

Capturing on f6 would have allowed 21 ... gxf6 22 ♚xh6 ♘g6 23 exf6 followed by mate on g7.

22 ♜g4



Now Jacques has everything in the attack apart from the kitchen sink! Was this the same person whom I'd only met two weeks before?

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♚ ♜ ♞ ♟ ♠ ♡ ♢ ♣	♘ ♙	6
Defence	♖ ♗	♚ ♞ ♟	3

**22 ... ♘f5 23 ♖xf5 ♚xc3 24
♜xg7+ ♖f8 25 ♚d6+**

At this juncture I feel that Dean should have asked for his copy of ATTACK 1!

I hope this book will have the same effect on your chess too!

GAME 21

Over the years I have had many exciting tussles with Stuart Conquest - this game although rather one-sided was no exception. I have to say that Stuart is one of the few players in the world that I have played that is capable of playing moves that I have not even considered. This quality is one of the reasons why Stuart is such a dangerous opponent.

White: Stuart Conquest
Black: Julian Hodgson
 German League 1996
Scandinavian Defence

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 ♚xd5 3 ♘c3 ♚a5 4 ♙c4 ♘f6 5 d4 c6 6 ♙d2 ♚c7 7 ♘f3 ♙g4 8 h3 ♙xf3 9 ♚xf3 e6 10 0-0-0

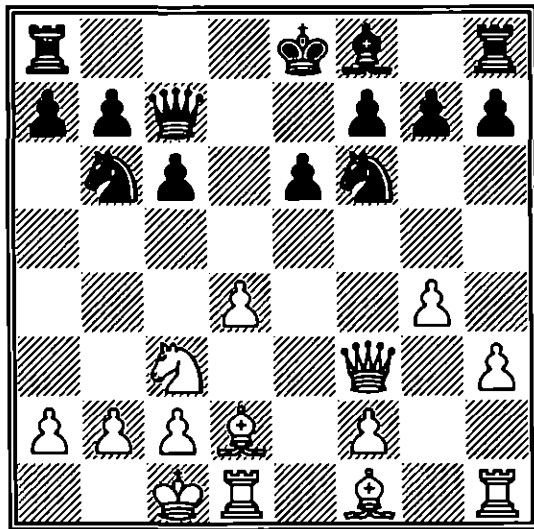
Although I have managed to rid myself of my bad bishop, I was not very happy with my opening. Black is not even half way through completing his development while White's army is almost fully mobilised.

10 ... ♘bd7 11 g4!

An excellent move from Stuart that gains space on the kingside and prepares to hassle one of my better placed pieces, the knight on f6. I rather optimistically was hoping to exploit the weakened f4 square - if ever

there was a case of wishful thinking then this was it!

11 ... ♘b6 12 ♙f1!



One of Stuart's best moves of the game. He sees that the bishop has little future on b3 so reroutes it to a more dynamic post.

12 ... ♖d8

I should probably have castled queenside but I did not fancy White's queen and bishop lining up on the long h1-a8 diagonal. Nevertheless this was undoubtedly the lesser evil.

13 g5 ♘g8?!

Possibly 13 ... ♘fd5 was better but I could see no good follow up after 14 ♘e4. It was around this stage that I was beginning to wish that I could start the game again.

14 h4!

Stuart handles these kinds of positions extremely well: he has a free hand to attack while Black does not even have a

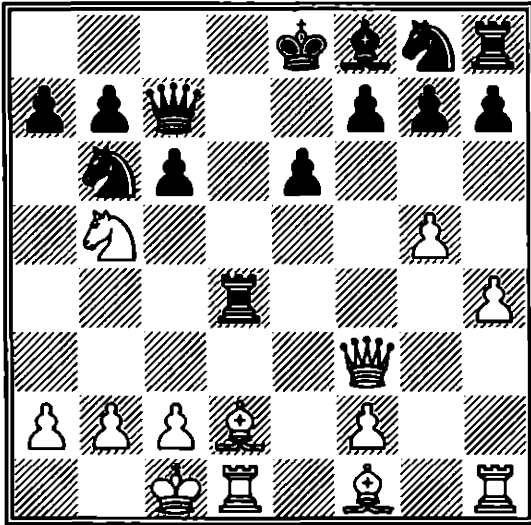
Swinging Rooks

snippet of counterplay.

14 ...♖xd4?

I played this move quite quickly: partly because I felt that if I spent too long I would see what was wrong with it and partly because I felt that my position was so bad I may as well be a pawn up for my troubles.

15 ♘b5!!



If anyone was going to find a refutation of my last move then it would be Stuart. My immediate reaction to this move was "Oh dear! I don't think this game is going to last too much longer." The problem is that I am fighting a battle without the use of any of my kingside pieces.

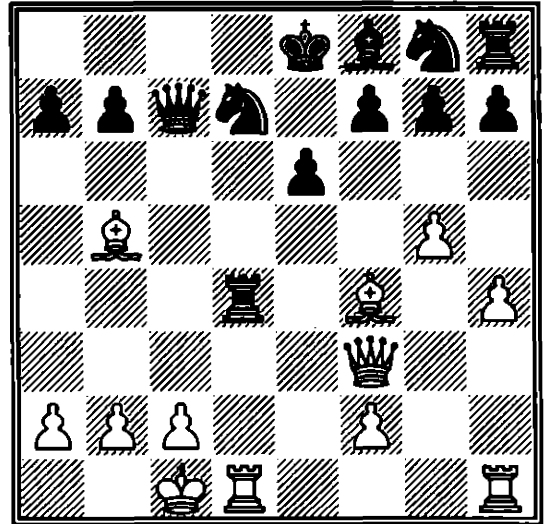
15 ...cxb5 16 ♙xb5+

White's knight has not died in vain, as suddenly all of White's remaining pieces spring into life.

16 ...♞d7 17 ♙f4!!

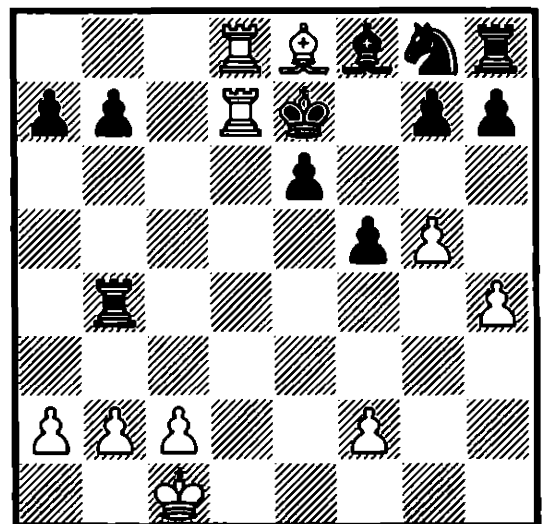
Another bone crusher of a move. Every move Stuart makes comes with gain of time,

giving me no chance to regroup.



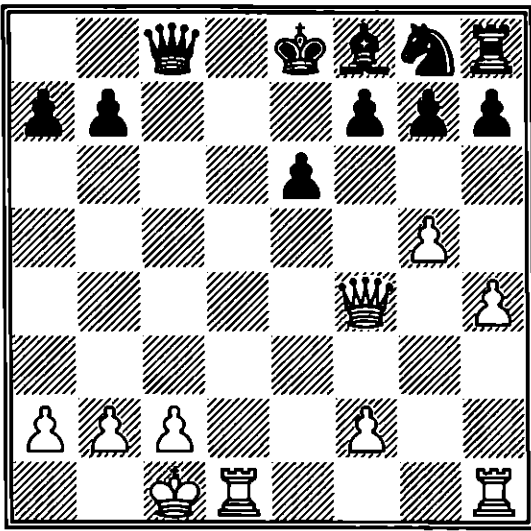
17 ...♖xf4

I had wanted to play 17 ...♗xf4+ but then I noticed that after 18 ♗xf4 ♖xf4 19 ♖xd7 there is no way for me to prevent mate. I saw the following beautiful continuation 19 ... ♖b4 20 ♖hd1! f5 21 ♖d8+ ♔f7 22 ♙e8+!! This move took me a long time to spot. Note how White's pawn on g5 plays an integral role in the mating net. 22 ...♔e7 23 ♖1d7 mate.



18 ♙xd7+! ♗xd7 19 ♗xf4 ♗c8

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2



For one blissful moment I felt that my opponent had mishandled the attack as after the obvious 20 ♖a4+ ♖c6 21 ♖xa7 ♜e7 22 ♖a8+ ♜c8 Black is actually hanging on. Stuart's next move shattered any illusions that I had been harbouring of saving the game.

20 ♜h3!!

Ouch! White's final piece enters the fray with devastating consequences.

20 ... ♞e7 21 ♜f3!

This is the beautiful point. Black's knight is diverted away from the crucial c6 square. There is no adequate way to prevent 22 ♖xf7 mate.

21 ... ♞f5 22 ♜c3

This move comes with unstoppable force.

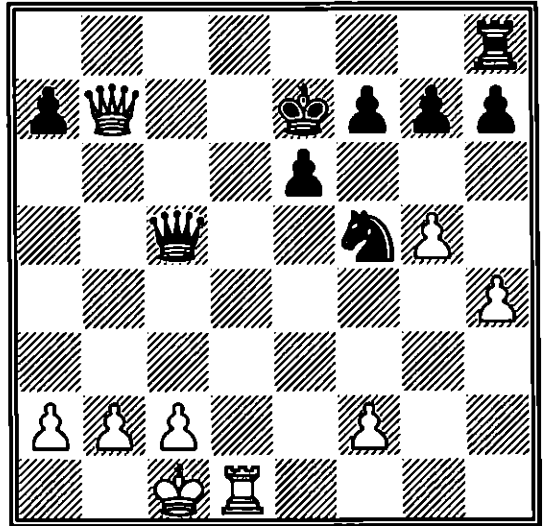
22 ... ♜c5

This loses but 22 ... ♖a8 23 ♖a4+ was not too appetising either.

23 ♜xc5!

My king's bishop contribution to the game was rather short lived!

**23 ... ♜xc5 24 ♜b8+ ♜e7
25 ♜xb7+**



I now rather unsportingly resigned. I think it would have been more appropriate if I had played on till mate with 25 ♜xb7+ ♜e8 26 ♜d7+ ♜f8 27 ♜d8 mate.

GAME 22

Vladimir Akopian has the reputation of being a very solid, strategic player. In this game Armenia's number one plays with a directness (one might even say crudeness) that I find quite refreshing. His opponent, Miguel Illescas, Spain's number one, is quite simply blown off the board. Vladimir conducts the attack in such a way that players of virtually all strengths would feel like they could have played this game.

Swinging Rooks

White: Vladimir Akopian
Black: Miguel Illescas
Ubeda 1997
Sicilian Defence

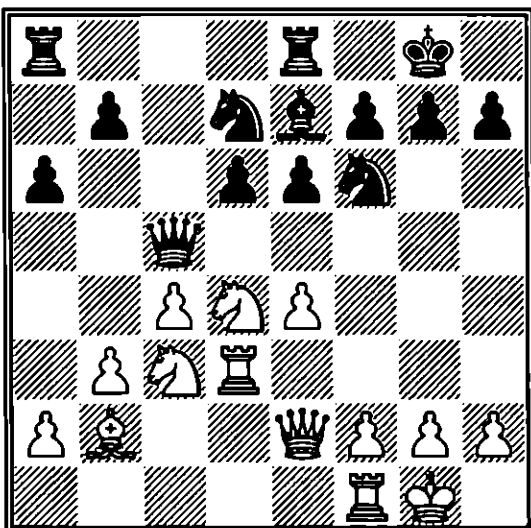
1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 b3

This might not look like the most dangerous move in the position but a surprise in the opening is always worth some psychological value. Already Miguel would have been feeling slightly uncomfortable.

3 ...d6 4 ♖b2 ♘f6 5 ♖b5+ ♙d7 6 ♖xd7+ ♘bxd7 7 ♚e2 ♙e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 c4 ♚c7 10 d4 cxd4 11 ♘xd4 a6 12 ♘c3 ♜fe8 13 ♜ad1 ♚c5

Akopian has developed all his pieces on their optimum squares. He now has to decide on a middlegame plan. There are several ways to play this position but clearly that day Vladimir was a man in a hurry.

14 ♜d3!



Vladimir decides to point all his pieces at the black king. Normally I would be inclined to advise against such a crude plan but in this particular position it has a reasonable chance of success. The white pawns on c4 and e4 provide a serious clamping effect. This formation is technically known as the "Maroczy Bind".

14 ...♘e5 15 ♘a4 ♚a5 16 ♜h3!

At this stage I would have loved to have known what Miguel was thinking. He could possibly have been amused or confused but would he have been worried? Attacks such as this are not supposed to work at Super Grandmaster level.

16 ...♘g6 17 f4!

Now the infantry joins in. Pawns are extremely useful in creating the initial breakthrough for the artillery.

17 ...e5

A very double-edged move. The normal recipe for meeting an attack on the flank is to counter-attack in the centre but here it has the serious drawback of allowing White's knight a wonderful out-post on f5. Having said that it is not so easy to find a constructive alternative as Black's pieces are not very well co-ordinated.

18 ♘f5!

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

Note how the white bishop on b2 and knight on f5 are lined up on g7 - sacrifices are already in the air.

18 ... ♗xf4

This is a hot pawn to take but improvements are hard to find.

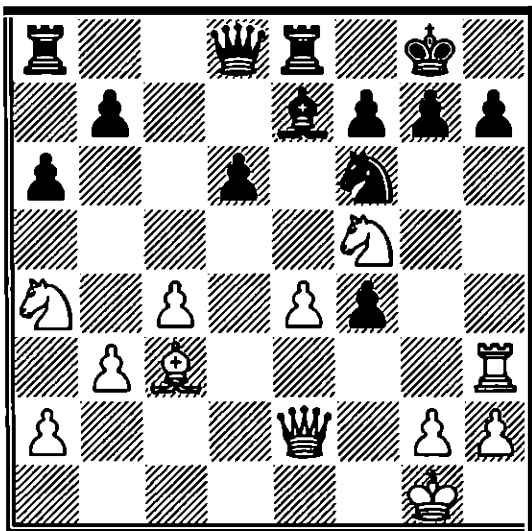
19 ♖xf4! exf4

Now the white bishop on b2 comes into its own. This piece almost single-handedly causes the destruction of the defences.

20 ♙c3!

A very strong quiet move. The black queen is forced to retreat. On a5 it could both swing across the fifth rank or even deliver a snap mate on e1. It is these little moves that are often the difference between success and failure.

20 ... ♛d8



21 ♘xg7!!

Bang! I am sure that Miguel really felt that. It might seem a little strange for White to part with his wonderful knight for a

measly pawn but it serves three purposes:

A) The knight removes a key defensive pawn.

B) It allows the white queen to join the attack with devastating effect.

C) White's bishop on c3 dramatically gains in strength.

21 ... ♔xg7 22 ♛g4+!

Look how the queen comes storming in.

22 ... ♔h8

It might look a little odd to place the king in the corner but the more natural 22 ... ♔f8 would be stunningly met by 23 ♖xh7!! followed by mate next move.

23 ♛f5!

Another very powerful move. It is quite instructive to watch how Akopian inches his queen nearer the black king with tempo.

23 ... ♔g8

Forced in order to prevent 24 ♛xh7 mate.

24 ♖h6!

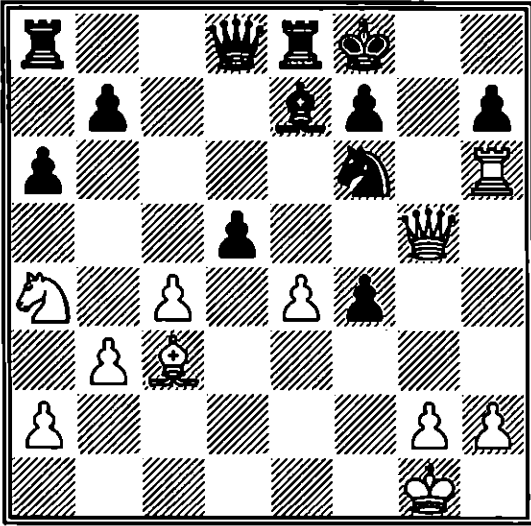
Increasing the pressure to breaking point. There is no way for Illescas to defend the knight on f6.

24 ... ♔f8 25 ♛g5!

Wonderful! Rather than win back some of the material Akopian rightly continues to play for mate. The threat is now 26 ♖xh7! ♘xh7 27 ♛g7 mate.

Swinging Rooks

25 ...d5



Pure desperation.

26 ♖xh7!

The net closes in...

26 ... ♙c5+

One of only two moves to avoid immediate mate. In case you are wondering 26 ... ♜b6+ was the other one!

27 ♞xc5

This natural reply is my favourite move of the game: the knight on a4 which for so long was playing second fiddle to its big brother on f5 suddenly plays the starring role in the final phase of the attack. Often the key to being a good attacker is the ability to make use of all your pieces even from the remotest parts of the board.

27 ... ♞xh7

This move is now possible as the e7 square has been vacated for the black king.

28 ♜h6+

Akopian now embarks on a delicate series of queen checks to derive maximum benefit from his aggressively placed pieces.

28 ... ♔e7 29 ♜h4+!

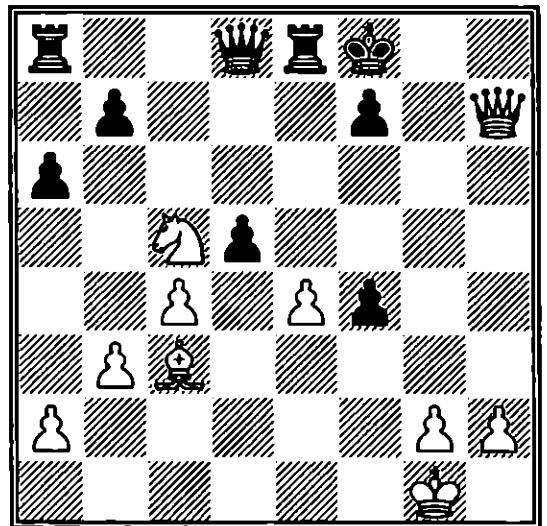
An important zwischenzug. Akopian wants to capture the knight with Black's king on f8 not e7 where it might have some chance of escaping to the queenside.

29 ... ♔f8

29 ... ♔d6 would lose to 30 ♞xb7+ forking king and queen.

30 ♜h6+ ♔e7 31 ♜h4+ ♔f8

32 ♜xh7

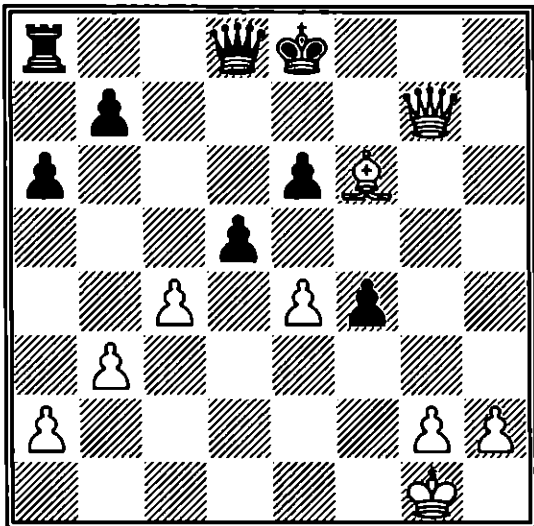


At long last Akopian decides to regain some of his sacrificed material. White is in fact still two exchanges for a pawn down but the attack continues unabated. Black has one free move to construct some sort of defence but there isn't one. Throughout this game it is noticeable how Black's rook on a8 never really contributes much to the defence of the black king.

32 ... ♖e6

The one other sensible looking move 32 ... d4 loses to 33 ♙b4! when 33 ... ♜b6 would allow both 34 ♜e6 or 34 ♜d7 mate.

33 ♜xe6+ fxe6 34 ♜g7+ ♔e8 35 ♙f6!



This sees the final nail in Black's coffin. Miguel cannot prevent both mate on e7 or the loss of the rook on a8.

35 ... ♜d6 36 ♜g8+ ♔d7 37 ♜xa8

An inglorious end to an inglorious performance from Black's queen's rook.

37 ... ♜b6+ 38 ♔f1 dxe4 39 ♜f8

Black resigned.

who was East Germany's leading player from the mid 50s up until the fall of Communism in the late 80s, is one such player.

Against 1 e4 he would invariably play his beloved French Defence while against 1 d4 he would play his beloved King's Indian. In general his results were quite superb with these two openings.

Wolfgang's opponent for this game was England's Jon Speelman. When it comes to openings Jon is the complete opposite from his East German counterpart, as he will try all means at his disposal to avoid conventional theory.

There are very few players in the world who have the imagination and talent to be able to do this - but it can safely be said that Jon is one of the few who has the ability to create chaos right from the beginning of the game.

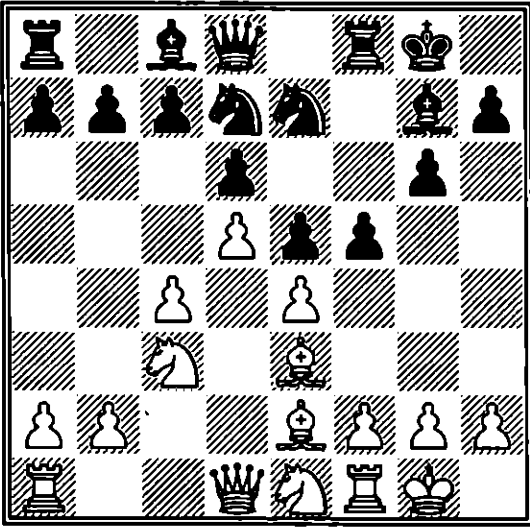
White: Jonathan Speelman
Black: Wolfgang Uhlmann
St Petersburg 1984
Classical King's Indian

GAME 23

There are certain players who remain very faithful to a few set openings. Wolfgang Uhlmann,

1 d4 ♜f6 2 ♜f3 g6 3 c4 ♙g7 4 ♜c3 0-0 5 e4 d6 6 ♙e2 e5 7 0-0 ♜c6 8 d5 ♜e7 9 ♜e1 ♜d7 10 ♙e3 f5

Swinging Rooks



This must be considered the main line of the King's Indian. If you are serious about improving then I can heartily recommend playing this opening both from the White and Black point of view. This is because the positions that are reached are so rich and varied that one is bound to learn more about the game.

White intends to launch a pawnstorm on the queenside and infiltrate down the c file. Black intends to play for checkmate by throwing both pawns and pieces into the attack. Let the race begin!

11 f3 f4 12 ♔f2 g5 13 ♖c1 ♜f6

Uhlmann finds the fastest available route to get his king's rook into the attack.

14 b4

Jon now puts his plan into action.

14 ... ♜h6 15 c5 a6!!

When there is play on both sides of the board it is important to take the odd time-out to make a defensive move. The idea is to hold up your opponent's plan for a couple of moves so you gain time overall. This one little pawn move plays a key role as it keeps White's knight out from b5.

16 cxd6

I'm not at all sure about this move. White should not release the tension until it is absolutely necessary. The black queen now has the a5-d8 diagonal at her disposal.

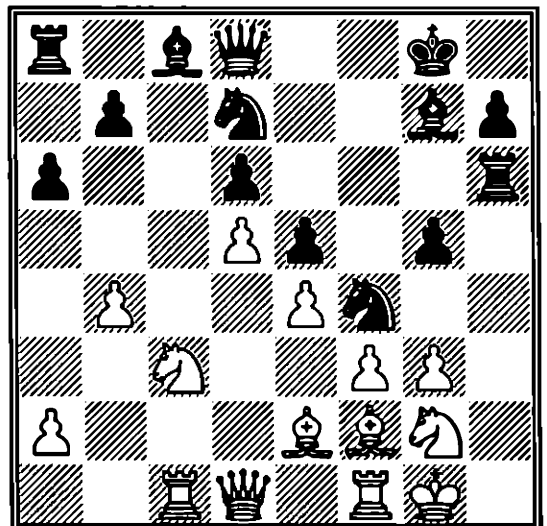
16 ... cxd6 17 g4

At first glance this move might look ridiculous but Jon realises that it is imperative to close the position on the kingside to lessen the black attack.

17 ... fxg3!

Well played! Wolfgang has no intention of allowing the position to become blocked up.

18 hxg3 ♘g6 19 ♘g2 ♘f4!!



ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

This is commonly known as the positional sacrifice. Uhlmann is prepared to give up a whole piece to keep the attack alive. It will still be several years before computers will be capable of playing such moves as it is simply beyond their horizon.

20 gxf4 gxf4

Jon would love to be able to run his king to the queenside but that is not so easy as all his own pieces are blocking its path.

21 ♔h4!

A good move. When you are a piece up you can afford to give back some material to stave off the attack. Unfortunately for Jon, Wolfgang is not tempted by the bait.

21 ... ♕f6!!

This is much stronger than 21 ... ♖xh4 when after 22 ♘xh4 ♗xh4 23 ♖f2! it is White who has the upper hand. Perhaps this is the variation that Jon had been anticipating.

22 ♔xf6 ♘xf6 23 ♔f2

Jon's king decides to head for the hills... .

23 ... ♖h2!

This move, however, puts a great big spanner in the works.

24 ♔g1

This move is sadly forced as the natural 24 ♖g1 would lose to 24 ... ♗b6+! 25 ♔f1 ♘h5!

winning. This is one of the reasons I was not very keen on Jon's 16th move as the opening of the g1 - a7 diagonal can often favour black.

24 ... ♖h3 25 ♔f2

Again Jon makes a desperate run for the hills... .

25 ... ♖g3!

But again Wolfgang thwarts him!

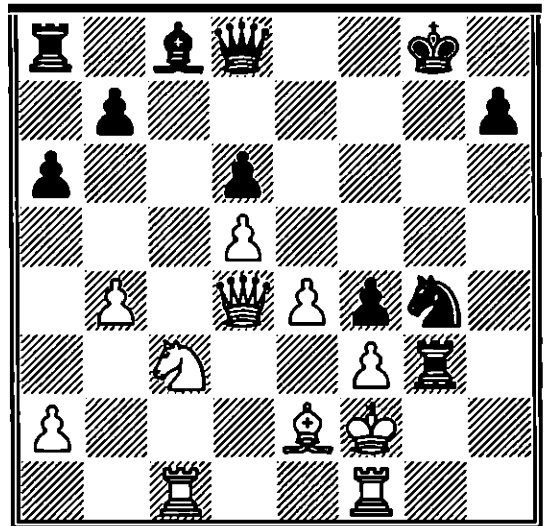
26 ♘xf4!

Jon is not going to give up without a fight.

26 ... exf4 27 ♗d4

Now at least Jon gets to centralise his queen cutting out any annoying checks on the a7 - g1 diagonal.

27 ... ♘g4+?!



Right idea but in the wrong move order. Wolfgang should have first played 27 ... ♔h3! 28 ♖g1 and only then 28 ... ♘g4+!! when after 29 fxg4 ♗h4 the attack is overwhelming.

28 ♔e1?

Swinging Rooks

As so often is the case one mistake is met by another. Jon should have played 28 f3g4! when after 28 ... ♖h4 he has the amazing resource 29 ♔e1!! when there is no really good discovered check.

28 ... ♞e5

Now Black is close to winning:

- A)** The knight on e5 is a monster.
- B)** The f3 pawn is a juicy target.
- C)** White's king on e1 is still a long way from finding refuge.

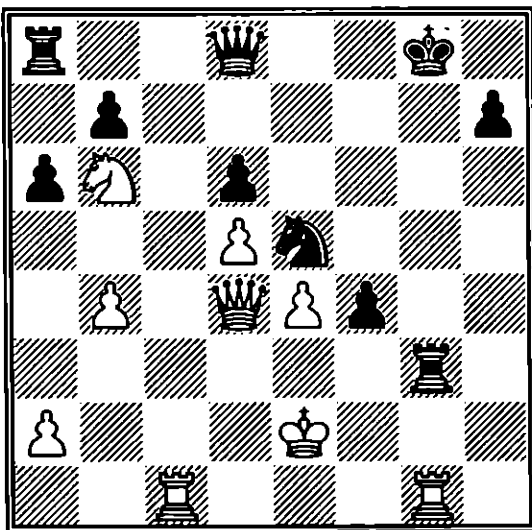
**29 ♔d2 ♖h3 30 ♜g1 ♖g2
31 ♞a4**

Desperation but there is nothing else.

31 ... ♖xf3

Now Black's f pawn is not only passed but also a useful addition to the black attack.

32 ♞b6 ♖xe2! 33 ♔xe2



33 ... ♛g5!!

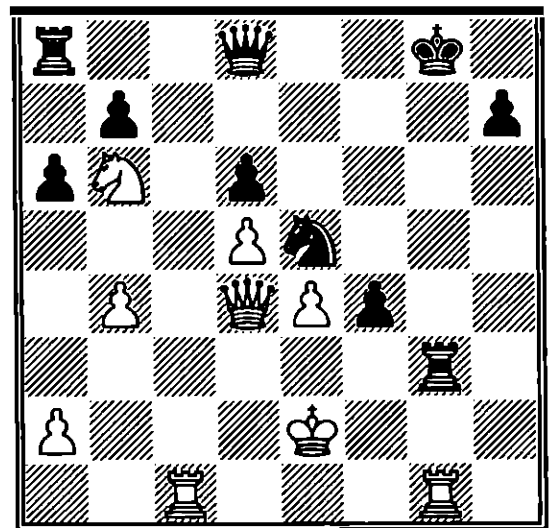
Wolfgang brings his queen in for the kill, realising rightly that the rook on a8 is something of an irrelevance.

34 ♞xa8 f3+

Black has four well coordinated attacking units, whereas White's defenders have gone AWOL!

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♛ ♜ ♞ ♠		4
Defence	♔ ♛ ♜	♜	3½

**35 ♔f2 ♜g2+ 36 ♜xg2
♛xg2+ 37 ♔e3 ♛g5+ 38
♔f2 ♛xc1**



Jon now decided to call it a day: either the f pawn will queen or the white king will be mated.

6 OPPOSITE COLOURED BISHOPS

Opposite coloured bishops are an interesting phenomenon. In the ending they can help the defending side save a position that would normally be completely hopeless. In the middle-game however, their presence can be a great aid to the attacking side; in effect there is an extra piece attacking on one set of coloured squares.

GAME 24

Nobody likes losing but some losses are easier to take than others. The next game took place in the European Team Championship in Haifa in 1989. I was playing White on board three against the then world number 5 Mikhail Gurevich in the vital England versus Soviet Union clash.

Up to this game I had been on a roll scoring an impressive 5½/6 playing (without being too modest about it) some great chess. We produced an amazing game. I could safely say it was one of the best games I have ever lost. My opponent's handling of the attack was quite superb.

White: Julian Hodgson
Black: Mikhail Gurevich
Haifa 1989
Dutch Defence

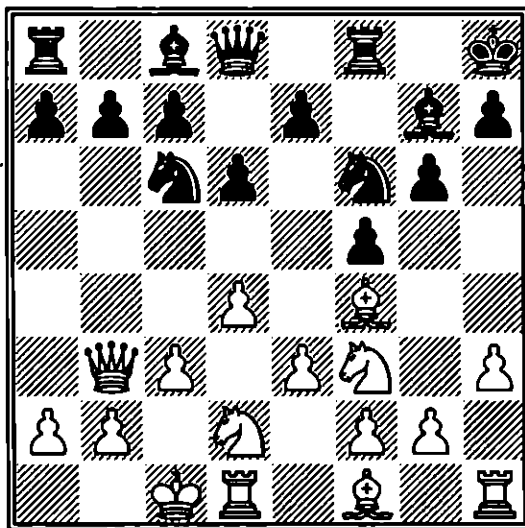
1 d4 f5

The Dutch is a rather underrated opening. It can be played against any White move apart from 1 e4 and the lesser played 1 g4. There are few players outside the very top level who have found a good way of playing against it.

2 ♖f3 ♗f6 3 h3

Well, what can I say? At least it's different!

3 ... g6 4 ♙f4 ♙g7 5 e3 d6
6 ♘bd2 ♘c6! 7 c3 0-0 8 ♚b3+ ♔h8 9 0-0-0!?



Opposite Coloured Bishops

Castling queenside against the Leningrad Dutch is hardly ever done - after this game I think I know why!

9 ... ♖e8!

I was already regretting my choice of opening.

10 d5

I was extremely reluctant to advance this pawn as the scope of Black's g7 bishop is dramatically increased. But I wanted to prevent my opponent from playing e5 at all costs.

10 ... ♘a5 11 ♚a3 b6 12 ♘b3 ♘e4!

Precisely! Micky homes in on my weak f2 pawn which has become rather difficult to defend due to my king's early queenside sortie.

13 ♙g3

Ugly but I couldn't see anything else.

13 ... ♘xg3 14 fxg3 e6!?

Gurevich's handling of the next phase of the game is exemplary - he does everything in his power to open up lines for his bishops and major pieces to blast away at my rather unhappily placed king.

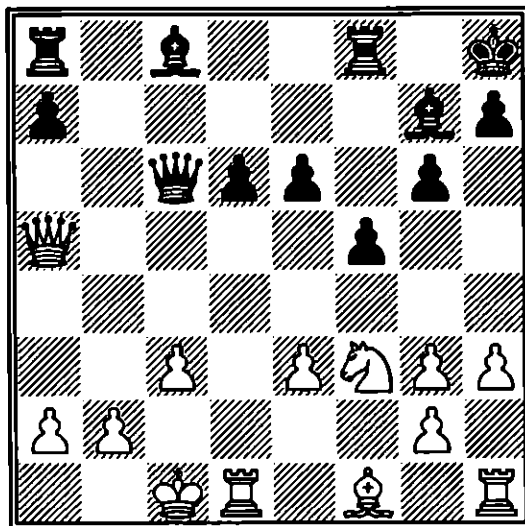
15 ♘xa5 bxa5 16 ♚xa5

I have won material but now the b file is open.

16 ... c6!

Opening yet more lines.

17 dxc6 ♚xc6



Despite being a pawn up I did not like my position for several reasons:

A) Black has two bishops; the one on g7 is especially dangerous. It not only secures the kingside but aims directly at White's king on the queenside.

B) There are two semi-open files (the b and c) for Black's major pieces to pile down.

C) Black has a mobile central pawn phalanx which serves two purposes: it deprives the white pieces of any firm foothold in the centre and at the same time the pawns can be advanced to further expose the enemy king.

I, however, was playing for queen and country and was not going down without a fight!

18 ♚b4! d5 19 h4!

The counter-attack commences...

19 ... ♙d7!

Excellently played. Micky continues to develop his pieces.

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

20 ♖d4!

I played this move to block the long black diagonal. 20 h5!? looks more natural but after 20 ... a5! 21 ♖a3 ♜fb8!! 22 hxg6 ♙f8! White's queen is in all sorts of trouble.

20 ... ♜c8 21 h5 g5!

Gurevich correctly keeps the kingside closed.

22 h6

My one consolation was that Micky would have to constantly worry about back rank mates.

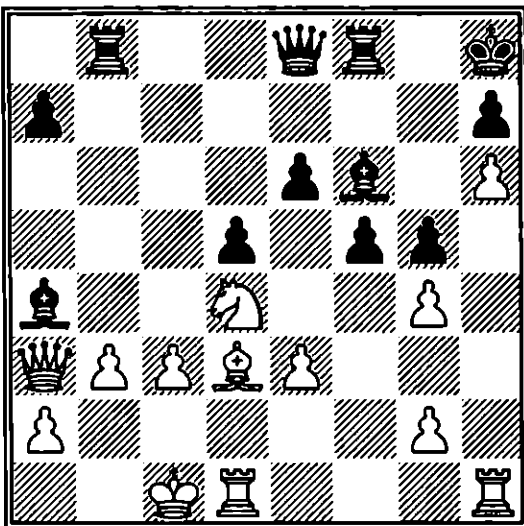
22 ... ♙f6 23 g4!?

If at first you don't succeed try again. I make another attempt to create threats on the kingside.

23 ... ♜b8 24 ♖a3 ♜e8!

A multipurpose move that holds Black's position together. From e8 the queen eyes all sectors of the board.

25 ♙d3 ♙a4! 26 b3?



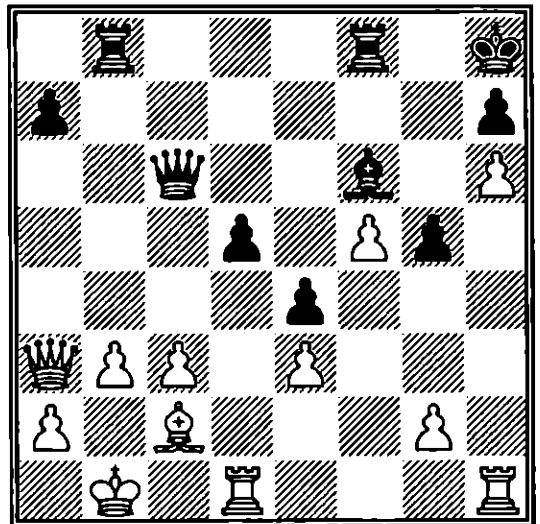
How could I play such an anti-positional move? At a stroke I

irreparably weaken my queenside.

26 ... ♙d7 27 ♖b1 e5!

I had completely missed this fine move. Black at the expense of a mere pawn opens the long black diagonal for his bishop.

28 ♖xf5 e4 29 ♙c2 ♙xf5 30 gxf5 ♜c6!



Now the error on my 26th move starts to really tell.

31 c4 ♜fd8!

Micky does not fall for my cheap tricks - I had been hoping for 31 ... ♜xc4?? 32 ♜xf8+! winning.

32 c5 ♜b5 33 ♙xe4 ♜xc5!

After the greedy 33 ... dxe4 34 ♜xd8+ ♙xd8 35 ♜xa7 ♙f6 36 ♜d1 I'm not even sure who is better. White has four pawns for the piece with threats along the back two ranks.

34 ♜xa7?

My normal motto is "If in doubt grab material!" Here, however, I should have been rather more

Opposite Coloured Bishops

restrained and contented myself with the defensive 34 ♖c1!

34 ... ♖c8!

The tripling on the c file proves overwhelming. White is three pawns up but is completely lost - such is the offensive power of the opposite coloured bishops.

35 ♙xd5

This is pure desperation but I had seen that after 35 ♙d3 ♖c2! was totally crushing.

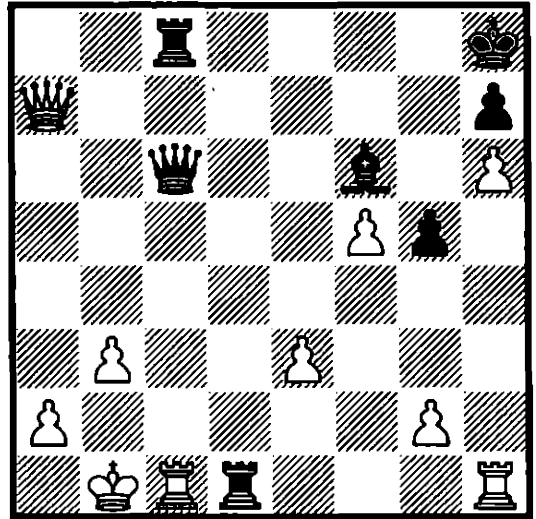
35 ... ♗b5

This move wins but Micky had an even stronger continuation at his disposal. I shall now recount the most amazing story.

After the European Team Championship I flew the very next day to play in the second G.M.A. tournament in Palma de Majorca. On the same flight a certain reigning World Champion was also travelling (first class!). I asked if he minded me telling him about an incredible game I had just played against one of his fellow countrymen.

I told him the moves and he followed them in his head (we did not have a chess set - not that he was in need of one). Anyway to cut a long story short I asked him what he would have played in this position after 35 ♙xd5. Before I had even had a chance to finish my question he had already replied 35 ... ♖xd5!

36 ♖c1 (forced) 36 ... ♖d1!!

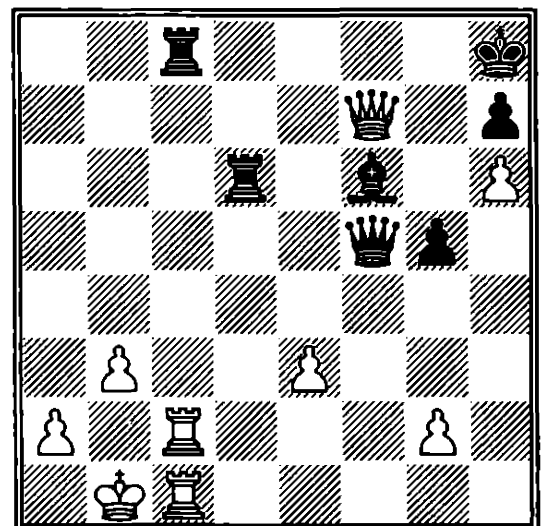


winning instantly on account of 37 ♖hxd1 ♗e4+ - Gary Kasparov is not the best player of all time for nothing!

36 ♖d2 ♖xd5 37 ♗f7 ♖d6!

This is the icing on the cake - the rook is immune on account of ♗xf5+.

38 ♖c2 ♗xf5 39 ♖hc1



39 ... ♗xc2+!

At this point I decided to adjourn to my room to contemplate my navel. Fortunately this defeat did not prevent me from winning an individual Gold medal.

GAME 25

Two or three years ago the young Bulgarian, Veselin Topalov, was virtually unheard of. Currently he has an ELO of 2725 and is ranked an impressive 6th in the world.

Veslin is relaxed with a positive mental attitude when he is away from the board, but he has monster concentration when the game itself is in progress. This method seems to have done the trick for him as he won one major tournament after another in 1996. It seems to me that he very rarely misses a tactical opportunity which makes him a formidable opponent.

His victim in the next game was the evergreen Jan Timman, who in the seventies and eighties was the West's leading player. The game follows a reasonable course but then just for one move Jan relaxes his guard and then, bang, it's all over!

White: Veselin Topalov

Black: Jan Timman

Amsterdam 1996

Advanced Caro Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5

I remember when I was about eight years old I used to play the Advanced Variation. I was

told it was not a good idea to push the e pawn as it lets the black bishop on c8 outside the pawn chain. But that is not the whole story; White has a significant space advantage and one day can hope to embarrass the bishop when it reaches f5.

**3 ... ♖f5 4 ♗f3 e6 5 ♖e2
♗d7 6 0-0 h6 7 b3!**

Veselin prepares to expand on the queenside with c4. His aim is to gain space on all sides of the board and slowly suffocate his opponent into submission.

7 ... ♘e7

Jan's main problem is how to find room for all his pieces. This move might look clumsy but he has to develop his king's knight somewhere.

8 c4 ♗g6 9 ♗a3!

The knight heads to e3 (via c2) to hassle the f5 bishop.

9 ... ♗f4!

Jan decides to nip this plan in the bud; by exchanging a pair of minor pieces he eases the congestion in his position.

10 ♖xf4 ♖xa3 11 ♖d3 ♖g4

Jan keeps the tension.

12 ♖b1!

A move from a top class player. I shall try to explain why:

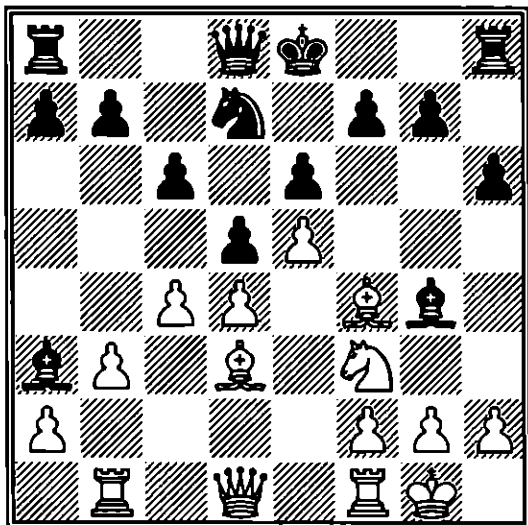
A) On b1 the rook cuts out a potentially irritating ♖b2.

B) It prepares b4 imprisoning

Opposite Coloured Bishops

the bishop on a3.

C) If Jan should ever capture on c4 then after bxc4 the rook will be nicely placed on the semi-open b file.



12 ... ♖e7 13 h3 ♙h5 14 ♗e2 0-0 15 ♚e3

Jan can be reasonably satisfied with his position. He has less space but has managed to avoid getting his queen's bishop blocked in behind his pawns...

15 ... a5?

Jan relaxes his guard for a moment which results in severe punishment.

16 cxd5 cxd5 17 ♙xh6!

Veselin rarely misses a tactical trick - his fifteenth move not only unpinned the f3 knight but also made this stunning sacrifice a possibility.

17 ... ♙xf3

Although Jan would have liked to have captured the other bishop on h6, he cannot as he would eventually be left with a

lost position in which White would have five connected passed pawns for a bishop.

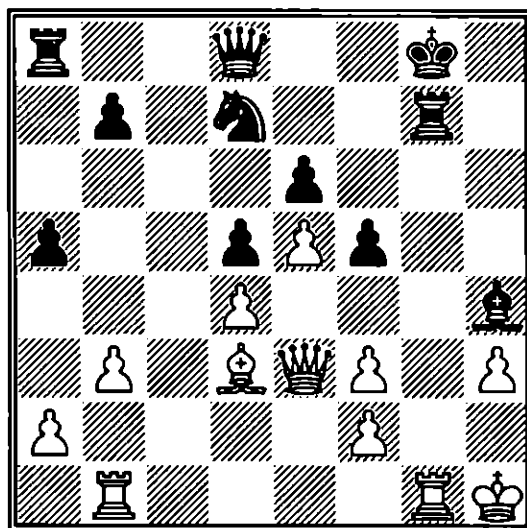
18 gxf3

At first glance it might seem a shame that Veselin is compelled to cripple his kingside pawn structure but this is outweighed by the fact that he can now use the semi-open g file for his rooks to home in on the black king.

18 ... ♙h4

Or 18 ... gxh6 19 ♚xh6 f5 20 ♚h1! when the end is near.

19 ♚h1! f5 20 ♖g1 ♖f7 21 ♙xg7! ♖xg7



This bishop has not died in vain; the pawn cover around Black's king has been shattered and to make matters worse White's queen can now enter the battle with crunching effect.

22 ♚h6!

From here the queen eyes the rook on g7, the bishop on h4 and the pawn on e6 - Jan can-

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

not defend everything.

22 ... ♖g5

Jan decides to jettison his least valuable possession, the e6 pawn, but when this key pawn disappears the whole edifice will come tumbling down.

23 ♛xe6+ ♔h8 24 ♛xf5

Veselin now has four pawns for the knight, which is more than enough. On top of that the attack rages on. The opposite coloured bishops are really working in Veselin's favour as he continues to use the white squares to infiltrate Black's position.

24 ... ♛e7 25 ♛g4!

A clever move! Veselin reroutes his queen to h5 by simply going around Black's bishop on g5.

25 ... ♞xe5

This smacks of pure desperation, but unfortunately for Jan there was nothing better.

26 dxe5 ♛xe5 27 ♜be1

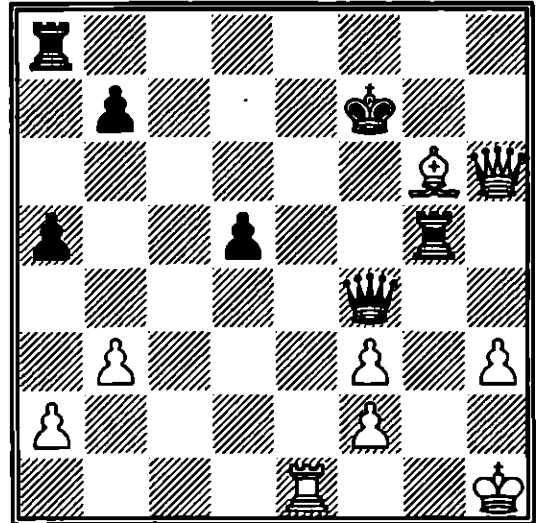
The rest of the game is easy for someone of Topalov's ability. He is two pawns up with the attack. Jan's only chance to draw lies in reaching an opposite coloured bishop ending (or start sketching!).

27 ... ♛f4 28 ♛h5+ ♔g8 29 ♜xg5!

As usual Veselin finds the most powerful continuation.

29 ... ♜xg5 30 ♛h7+ ♔f8 31

♛h6+ ♔f7 32 ♞g6+!



A pretty finish - Veselin uses the skewer on the g5 rook to deliver mate as follows: 32 ... ♔f6 33 ♞e8+ ♔f5 34 ♞d7 mate.

GAME 26

David Norwood is a man of many talents. He did an outstanding job as captain of the English team in the 1996 Olympiad in Yerevan, taking the team to the very brink of victory. However, he is also no mean player himself.

Many games get played every year in the premier league of the prestigious German Bundesliga, but there will be few as important as the following one. This game decided the outcome between the two top teams, David's team, Solingen and the mighty Empor Berlin which both Kramnik and Shirov play for.

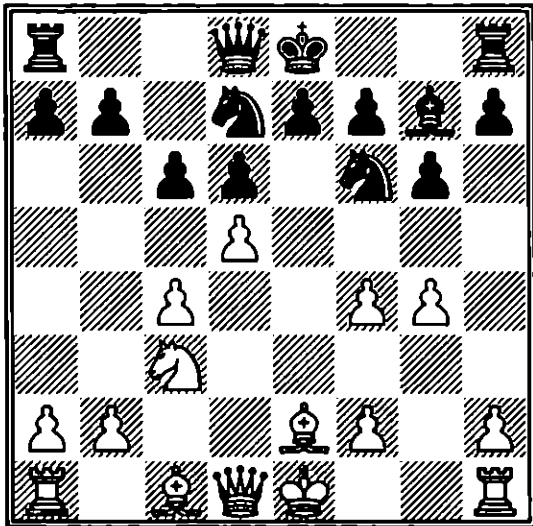
Opposite Coloured Bishops

White: David Norwood
Black: Valery Chekhov,
German League 1997
Side Step Variation

1 ♖f3 d6 2 d4 ♙g4 3 c4 c6
 4 ♘c3 ♘d7 5 d5 ♙xf3 6
 exf3 g6 7 f4

David knows the long term plan in this position. He will use the f and h pawns as battering rams against Black's g6 pawn. Then he can use his main trump, his white squared bishop, to further increase the pressure. Because Black's c8 bishop is already in the club house Black will find it difficult to find a satisfactory antidote to this plan.

7 ... ♙g7 8 ♙e2 ♘gf6 9 g4!



Many players, including myself, would be extremely reluctant to play such a committal move so early in the game. But what Dave has realised is that Black is not well enough placed to exploit the potential weaknesses that this move has created.

9 ... cxd5 10 cxd5 ♔a5 11
 0-0!

I like it! Dave plays g4 and then castles kingside. What can I say - it works.

11 ... 0-0 12 g5!

Another strong move. Just look at the tangle Black's knights are in.

12 ... ♘e8 13 ♖e1!

This is the move that does a lot of the damage. It is not at all easy for Black to defend the e7 pawn.

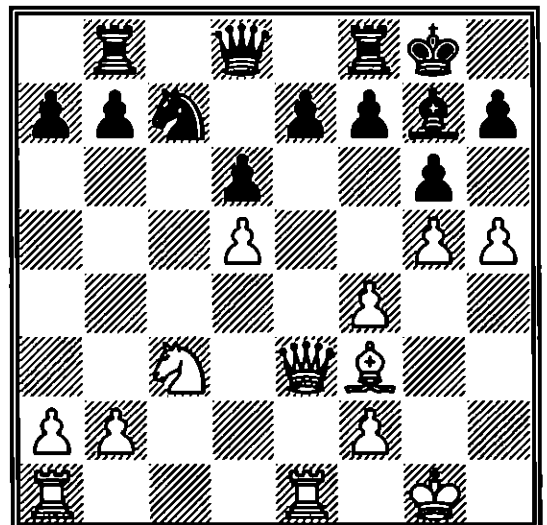
13 ... ♔d8

The most natural move 13 ... ♘c7 is well met by 14 ♙g4!

14 h4!

Dave continues his strategy of undermining Black's kingside.

14 ... ♘c7 15 h5 ♘b6 16
 ♙f3 ♖b8 17 ♙e3 ♘c4 18
 ♔e2 ♘xe3 19 ♔xe3!



Dave correctly maintains the pressure on e7 rather than un-double his pawns with the inferior 19 fxe3.

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

19 ... b5 20 ♖ad1 b4 21 ♘e4

Look how David's pieces are slowly but surely edging their way over towards the black king.

21 ... ♘b5

Black could capture the pawn on b2 but it is something of an irrelevance.

22 ♙g4 ♜b6 23 ♜h3!

David is gearing up to penetrate down the h file.

23 ... ♘d4 24 ♙g2 ♜fd8

Chekhov makes an escape square for his beleaguered king. But not even Scottie can beam him up from this mess!

25 hxg6 hxg6 26 f5!

David makes his doubled f pawns work for him. The one on f2 provides excellent protection for his king, while the one on f5 provides the vital breakthrough.

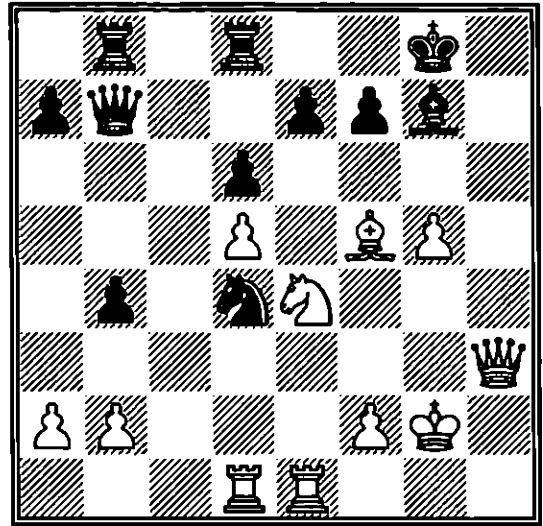
26 ... gxf5 27 ♙xf5

This is yet another example where the presence of opposite coloured bishops helps the attacking side. Now 28 g6, the culmination of White's plan, is a huge threat.

27 ... ♜b7

Attack Statistics							
Offence	♜	♞	♝	♙	♘	♗	6
Defence		♚	♛		♞		2½

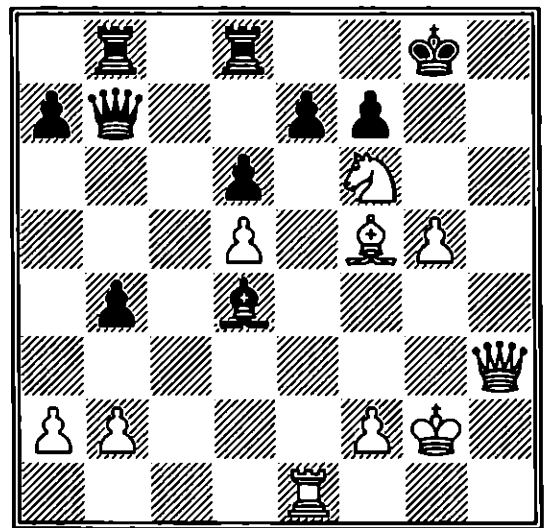
Just look at all those attackers!



28 ♜xd4!

Dave would have been itching to play this move. The rest of the game is a massacre.

28 ... ♙xd4 29 ♘f6+!!



Bang!

29 ... ♙xf6 30 ♜h7+

Crash!

30 ... ♙f8 31 gxh6

And Wallop! ♜h8+ is coming and there is absolutely nothing that Valery can do to stop it.

31 ... ♜xd5+ 32 ♙g1

Black resigned. A highly thematic game from my best man!

GAME 27

In a perfect world we would always play beautiful games in which our attacks would flow from beginning to end culminating in a brilliant checkmate.

In the real world, however, it never really works out quite as smoothly as that. In the following game, as Black, against Murray Chandler, I had to first withstand my opponent's early onslaught before gradually turning the tables to build up a devastating attack of my own.

White: Murray Chandler
Black: Julian Hodgson
British Championship 1988
Caro Kann 4 ... ♖f6

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 dxe4
 4 ♗xe4 ♖f6 5 ♗xf6+ exf6

For a brief period in the late eighties I had quite a lot of success with this move. Black has open lines for his pieces and four kingside pawns (as opposed to the normal three) with which to defend the king. There is, however, a price to pay for this. In the long term White's four to three majority on the queenside is a real asset.

6 c3 ♔d6 7 ♔d3 0-0 8 ♘e2
 ♙e8 9 ♚c2!

This set up of the White pieces

is the one to cause most problems for Black. There is no convenient way to protect the h7 pawn - if only I could play my knight from b8 to f8 in one move!

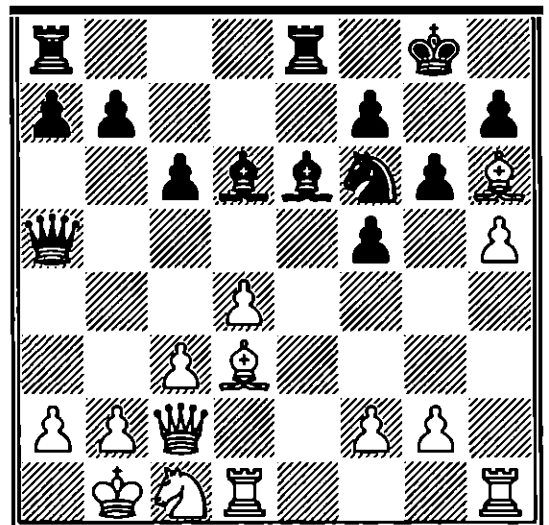
9 ... g6

Probably best, but now White has a clear way by advancing the h pawn to open lines against the black king.

10 h4! ♔e6 11 ♔h6 f5 12
 0-0-0 ♘d7 13 ♚b1 ♚a5 14
 ♗c1 ♗f6

The play has developed along logical lines. With the kings on opposite wings it is inevitable that the middle game will burst into life.

15 h5!



Murray is first to strike - material is not so important when the king is at stake.

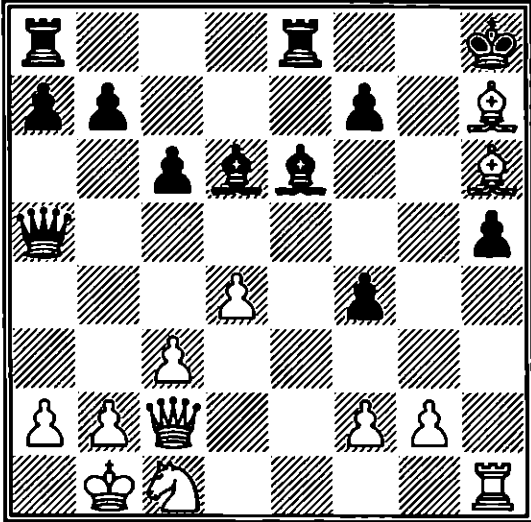
15 ... ♗xh5 16 ♙xh5! gxh5
 17 ♙h1

Although I am now the exchange and a pawn up I was

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

not at all happy with my position. My king is vulnerable while my opponent's king seemed rock solid. I, therefore, decided to confuse the issue.

17 ... f4!? 18 ♖xh7+ ♔h8



Although it might look like Murray is on the verge of victory, matters are not quite so clear. I have a rook, two bishops, queen plus a couple of pawns and my king all defending. My queen combines lateral defence along the fifth rank with an attack on White's a2 pawn.

19 ♖e4 ♖g4 20 f3 ♜e6

In many games there is a crucial turning point at which the attacking side is gradually forced back on the defensive. This is it. If Murray had now played 21 ♖xf4! then I think he would have maintained the upper hand.

**21 ♞b3 ♝d8 22 fxg4 ♜xh6
23 gxh5**

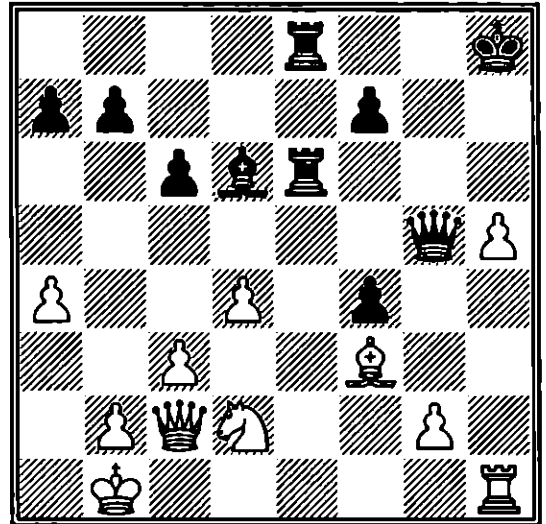
Although the position is objectively very unclear I was much more confident about my long

term prospects because my king on h8 is relatively secure. Indeed, the pawn on h5 is, if anything, a hindrance to White's attack as it blocks the h file.

23 ... ♝g5 24 ♖f3 ♜e8!

A good move that activates my last piece.

25 ♞d2 ♜he6 26 a4



I now saw the following plan:

A) Reroute my bishop to the a1–h8 diagonal. From here it defends my king while attacking my opponent's.

B) Advance my queenside pawns to open lines against my opponent's king.

C) Infiltrate down the open lines with my major pieces.

26 ... ♖f8! 27 ♞c4 ♖g7

Plan A completed.

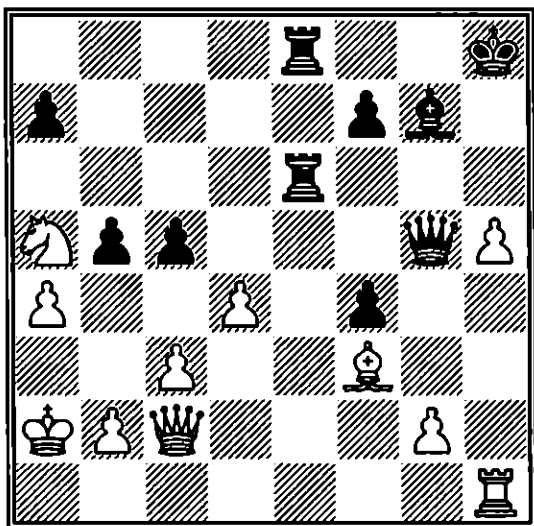
28 ♔a2 b5!

Now Plan B commences. It is something of a bonus that this move also gains time by attacking White's knight on c4.

Opposite Coloured Bishops

29 ♖a5 c5!

Look how I gradually pry open the long black diagonal for my bishop. If necessary I am even prepared to sacrifice several pawns to achieve this aim.



30 axb5 cxd4 **31** c4 a6! **32** ♖a4 axb5 **33** ♖xb5

All of a sudden, the a, b and c files have all been cleared for the black rooks. I now decided to aim all my pieces at White's weakest point, the b2 pawn.

33 ... ♜e5 **34** ♞d5 d3!

Finally, my bishop has become a monster, dominating the entire board.

35 h6 ♞f6 **36** ♖b3 ♜e2!

Plan C: coming in for the kill ...

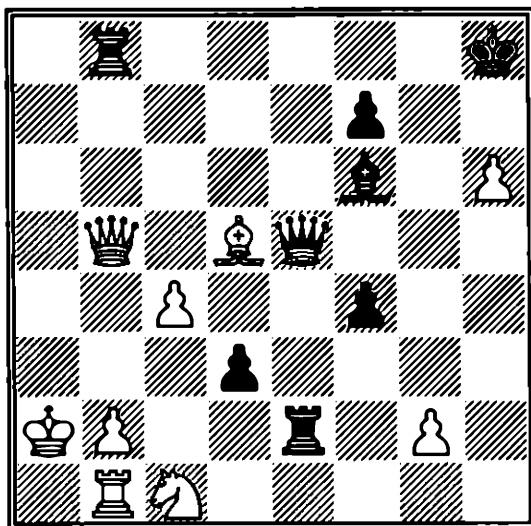
37 ♜b1 ♖e5

Inexorably the pressure mounts.

38 ♖c1 ♜b8

Now we see the conclusion of Black's strategy as the attack reaches its pinnacle. White must now lose vast amounts of ma-

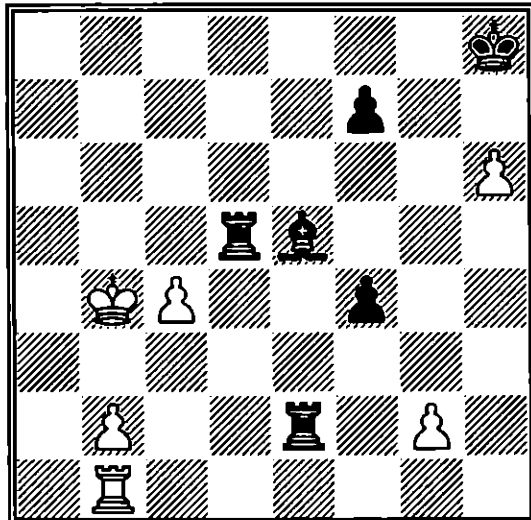
terial as queen moves allow ♜xb2+ quickly followed by mate.



39 ♖xd3 ♜xb5 **40** ♖xe5 ♜a5+ **41** ♔b3 ♞xe5

Black is now a whole rook up which is ample to win the game.

42 ♔b4 ♜xd5!



Often the easiest way to win when you are a lot of material up is to give some of it back to liquidate into a winning ending.

43 cxd5 ♜xb2+ **44** ♜xb2 ♞xb2

Murray now resigned as the ending a piece down is hopeless for White.

7 PAWN POWER

As I commented in my previous book in the chapter entitled, "The Pawn Roller", I can't stress enough how the handling and placement of pawns is fundamental to the game.

Knowing when and how far to advance one's pawns is a difficult but important skill to master.

- ◆ Too rashly advanced:
The pawns can become stranded and weak - easy to pick off.
- ◆ Too slowly advanced:
Your opponent's pieces can rapidly dominate the entire board.

In the games that follow it is the accurate timing of a pawn thrust that decides the outcome.

GAME 28

I wasn't actually present at the annual Hastings festival, which is held over Christmas and New Year. I felt, however, the following game really stood out from all the rest. It sees the former British Champion and Hastings local, GM James Plaskett, at his

sparkling, brilliant best.

White: Colin McNab
Black: James Plaskett
Hastings Challengers 1997
English Opening

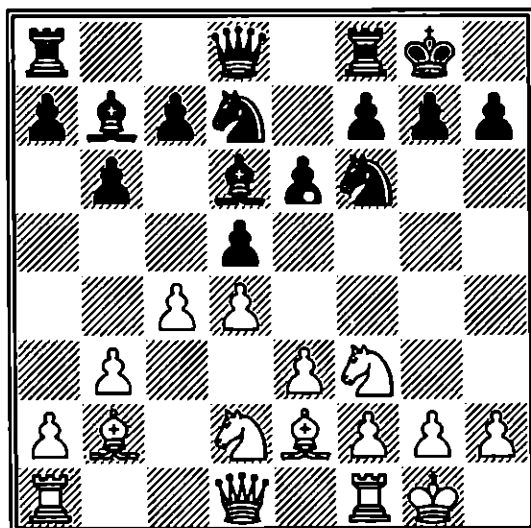
1 c4 b6

Jim has a lot of success with this move as it is well suited to his ultra daring aggressive style.

2 b3

This move although not bad, does not really challenge Black's set-up. Colin, however, as a general rule, does not like to advance his e and d pawns too far at the start of the game.

2 ... ♖b7 3 ♖b2 e6 4 ♘f3 ♗f6 5 e3 d5 6 ♗e2 ♗d6 7 0-0 ♘bd7 8 d4 0-0 9 ♘bd2



Pawn Power

Both sides have gone about their business completing their development. Many players would now play c5 in order to reach equality, but Jim's move is much more ambitious. The word 'draw' does not exist in his vocabulary.

**9 ... ♖e4!? 10 ♖xe4 dxe4
11 ♖e5**

Again Colin is happy to reach a symmetrical position but again Jim declines the offer.

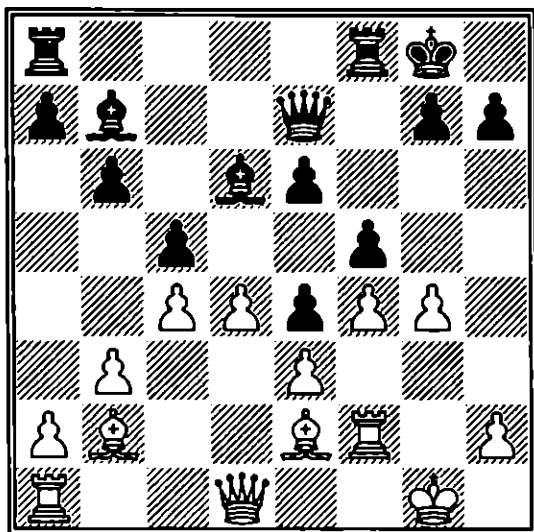
11 ... f5

11 ... ♖xe5 was the less ambitious option. Note how Jim has already managed to mix it up due to the unbalanced pawn formation.

**12 ♖xd7 ♕xd7 13 f4 ♕e7
14 ♖f2 c5!**

Jim strikes at White's pawn centre.

15 g4!?



Colin decides to fight fire with fire. His plan is to line up his pieces against g7, using the b2

bishop along the a1-h8 diagonal while his rooks can make a frontal assault down the g file. There is, however, one serious drawback to this idea - White's king also loses some of its cover.

15 ... cxd4 16 gxf5

In for a penny in for a pound. After the seemingly safer 16 ♖xd4 Jim can play 16 ... e5! when 17 fxe5 ♖xe5 18 ♖xe5 ♕xe5 19 gxf5 ♖xf5 favours Black due to the exposed location of the white king. Black has g and h pawns defending his own king while White only has an h pawn covering his. In the middle game the safety of the king is a much more relevant factor in comparison to White's potential passed pawn on the queenside.

16 ... d3

Out of nothing Jim has managed to obtain a protected passed pawn on his 6th rank. I just don't know how he does it!

17 ♖g2 e5!

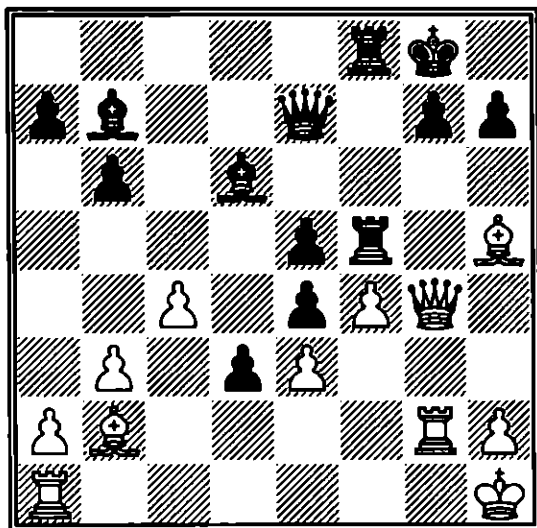
I think this is the first time in my life that I have seen such a strange pawn configuration.

18 ♖h5 ♖xf5 19 ♕g4

It is incredible how both players are trying to attack on the same side of the board - it could only happen in one of Jim's games.

19 ... ♖af8 20 ♖h1

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2



20 ... ♖xf4!!

Absolutely brilliant! Jim is prepared to sacrifice a whole rook to mobilise his central pawn mass and get his bishops going.

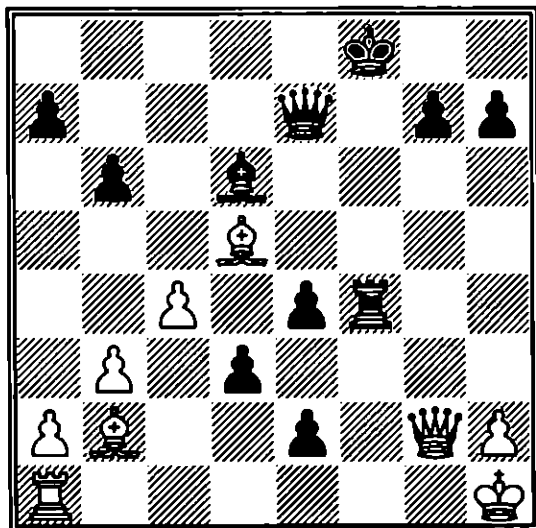
21 exf4 ♜xf4 22 ♚h3 e3

Here they come... .

23 ♙g4 ♙xg2+ 24 ♚xg2 e4

And yes folks, there's another one!

25 ♙e6+ ♚f8 26 ♙d5 e2



I would also like to point out that Jim in his youth was superb at space invaders!

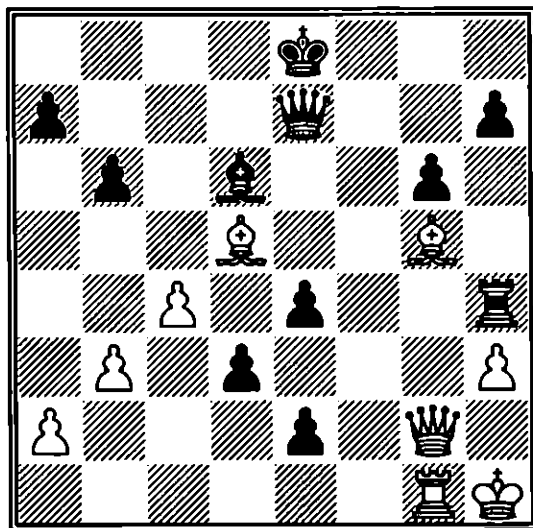
27 ♜g1 g6 28 ♙c1 ♜h4

It is typical of Jim that he should look for the spectacular finish. Most players would have played the simple 28 ... e3 which wins fairly comfortably but then most players would not have reached this position in the first place!

29 h3 ♚e8!?

The exclamation mark is for the move's practical value but the question mark is for the move's objective merit. With his opponent short of time Jim sets a very cunning little trap, but the mundane 29 ... e3 or 29 ... ♙f4 would have been safer ways for Jim to convert his advantage.

30 ♙g5?



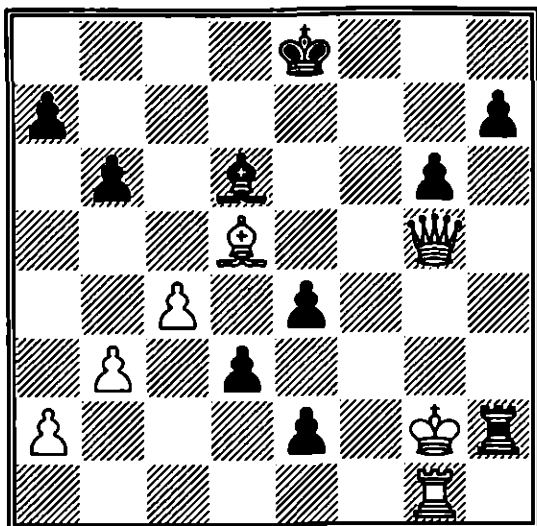
A bit late, it should have been played on move 2! On a serious note Colin takes the bait - hook, line and sinker! Although this move seems hard to resist White should have tried 30 ♙c6+! when Jim would only have one way to win through a minefield of complications.

30 ... ♚xg5!!

Pawn Power

Ouch! Jim lands the knockout punch.

31 ♖xg5 ♜xh3+ 32 ♔g2 ♜h2 mate.



The diagram speaks for itself.

GAME 29

Many former Soviet players who have emigrated to the West have not found life quite so easy as they had first imagined. One player, however, who has taken to life in the West like a fish to water is the amiable and popular Alexander Yermolinsky.

Alex has been highly successful in a host of tournaments since emigrating. Unlike many players from the former Soviet school of chess he plays with great energy and imagination - it can safely be said that his games are rarely dull. Although it hurts me to write it, his outstanding

result in the Yerevan Olympiad was the main reason the U.S. team pipped the English team for the bronze medal.

Here then is one of the many wins which carried him to victory in the 39th U.S. Championship in Long Beach, California in 1993.

White: Patrick Wolff
Black: Alex Yermolinsky
U.S. Championship 1993
French Tarrasch

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 a6 4 ♘gf3 c5 5 dxc5 ♙xc5 6 ♙d3 ♘e7 7 0-0 ♘bc6 8 c3 0-0 9 exd5 exd5 10 ♘b3 ♙d6

This type of position is considered to be slightly better for White due to the potential long term weakness of the isolated pawn on d5. But let's enjoy the way Alex deploys his pieces to active squares to negate the effect.

11 ♜e1 h6

Alex of course does not play 11 ... ♙g4? which would allow one of the oldest tricks in the book: 12 ♙xh7+! ♜xh7 13 ♘g5+ winning a pawn.

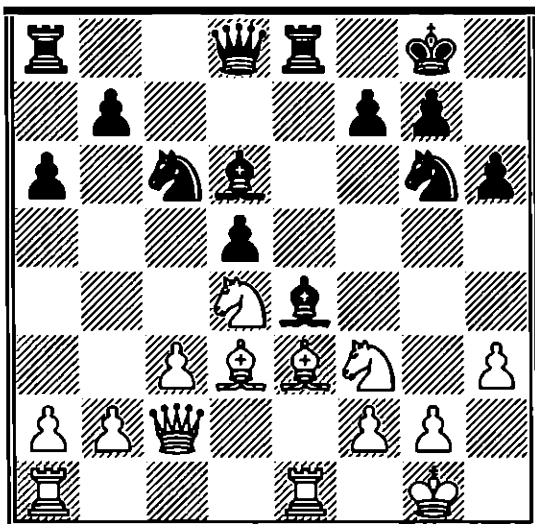
12 h3 ♙f5 13 ♙e3 ♜e8 14 ♘bd4 ♙e4

Sometimes this bishop can be-

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

come a liability as it can often become hemmed in by its own pawn on d5. But look instead at how Black makes it an asset rather a hindrance - it is now one of the best minor pieces on the board.

15 ♖c2 ♘g6!



A strong multipurpose move:

A) The e line is opened for the black rook.

B) The d8-h4 diagonal is cleared for the black queen.

C) The knight is ideally placed to initiate a kingside attack as it is ready to jump into f4 or h4.

16 ♙xe4

This is a very committal move as it straightens out Black's pawn structure.

16 ... dxe4

The e4 pawn now becomes a useful attacking unit. Patrick had no doubt calculated that he would win a pawn but he had not seen nearly far enough.

17 ♘d2 ♘xd4 18 ♙xd4 f5

19 ♚b3+

Patrick takes the bait - any other move, however, would have made no sense of his preceding play.

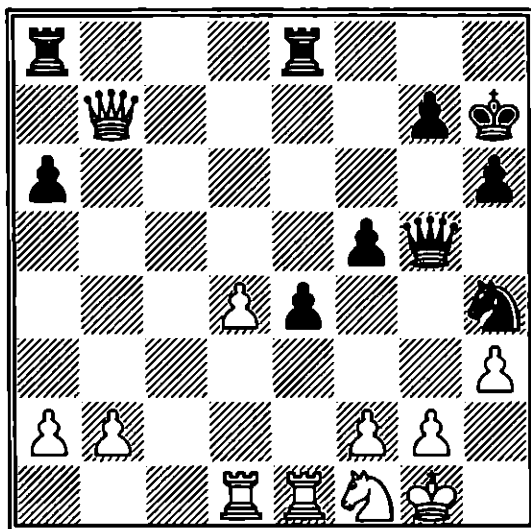
19 ... ♔h7 20 ♚xb7 ♙e5!

A good move that prevents mate on g7 and exchanges off White's most active piece.

21 ♖ad1 ♙xd4 22 cxd4 ♚g5!

Now it's Black's turn to have some fun! Queen and knight can be a deadly attacking combination because the knight can control a lot of the squares that the queen can't reach. To give the attack even more punch Black has a mobile kingside pawn majority with a couple of rooks to provide support.

23 ♘f1 ♘h4



24 ♘g3

This is bad but the alternatives are no better. e.g.

A) 24 g3 ♘f3+ winning the exchange.

B) 24 ♖e3 f4 25 ♖g4 h5! when the knight runs out of ways to stave off mate and save itself.

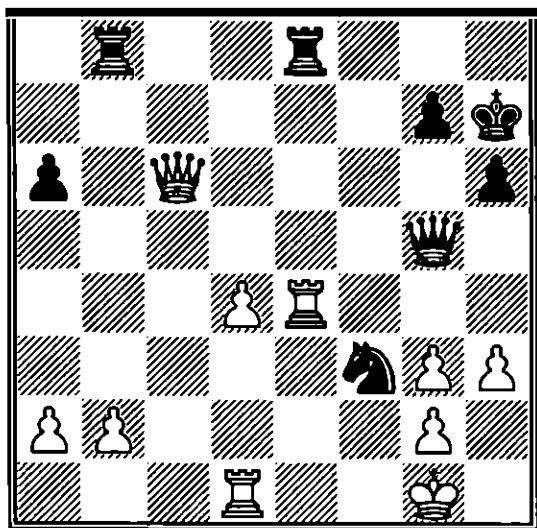
24 ... f4 25 ♖xe4 fxc3

The attack nets a piece. The rest is relatively straightforward.

26 fxc3 ♖ab8!

Alex activates his rook on a8 before doing anything else on the kingside.

27 ♕c6 ♗f3+!



A nice touch which forced instant resignation. Clearly taking the knight on f3 with 28 gxf3 would result in mate after 28 ... ♕xg3+ 29 ♔f1 ♖xb2!

But how would Alex have continued if White had played the cunning 28 ♔f1 ? The answer is this: 28 ... ♗d2+! forking king and rook, 29 ♖xd2 (forced) 29 ... ♕xd2 30 ♖xe8 and now Black gives a subtle check with 30 ... ♕d1+! when both (i) 31 ♖e1 ♖f8+ or (ii) 31 ♔f2 ♖xb2+ are hopeless for White.

GAME 30

It is rare indeed, that one of the world's top ten players is checkmated in under 25 moves. This was the fate that befell Boris Gelfand in his game with Alexander Beliavsky in the super strong Linares tournament in 1992. Boris (with the possible exception of the World Champion Gary Kasparov) has the most well worked out opening repertoire of any player I know. Indeed, I say this from bitter experience as only recently, in Groningen, he single-handedly refuted one of my main lines of the Trompovsky with a move that he had prepared over two years before!

Well, what went wrong in the following game you might ask? The answer is really quite simple; Boris tried a rather dubious opening which happened to be trendy at the time. But "Big Al" was ready for him!

White: Alexander Beliavsky
Black: Boris Gelfand
Linares 1992
Winawer Gambit, Slav

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗c3 e5

This is the rather dubious move that I mentioned in the introduction. It is not a true gambit as

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

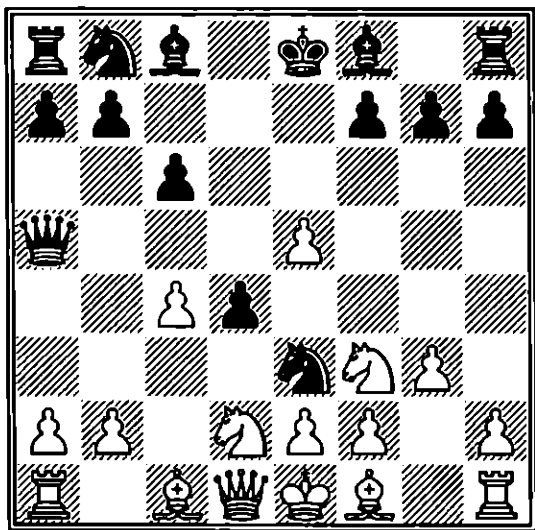
Black can if he so desires win the pawn back by force but that is not really the point of the opening. Black is hoping for rapid development by opening up the diagonals for his bishops.

4 dxe5 d4 5 ♖e4 ♜a5+ 6 ♗d2 ♗h6

An odd looking move, the idea of which will become apparent in a few moves. I should just mention that 6 ... ♜xe5? 7 ♗gf3 is not very promising for Black.

7 ♗gf3 ♗f5 8 g3 ♖e3

This is the big idea, but it is not a very good one because Black moves the same piece three times only to exchange it off. In the opening, time is of the essence, therefore you waste it at your peril!



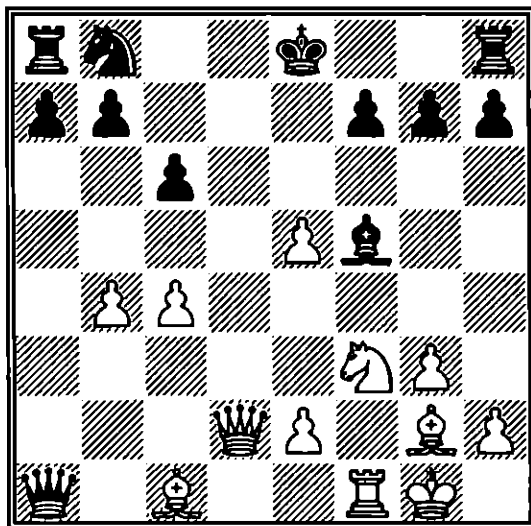
9 fxe3 dxe3 10 a3 ♗f5?

Boris commits another mistake as the bishop soon becomes a target on this square. 10 ... ♗a6 was to be preferred.

11 ♗g2 ♗c5

This temporarily prevents Alexander from castling but it allows White to sacrifice material for a never ending initiative.

12 b4! ♗xb4 13 axb4 ♜xa1 14 0-0! exd2 15 ♜xd2



Black is the exchange up but that is the end of the good news:

- A) The queen is awkwardly placed on a1.
- B) The rooks have no activity whatsoever.
- C) The king is still out in the open.
- D) The queen's knight is yet to be developed.
- E) The really bad news, however, is that his one supposed good piece, the bishop on f5, is rather exposed and only serves to speed up the White attack.

White on the other hand has:

- A) Virtually completed his development.
- B) Has two raking bishops.
- C) Has a knight that is ready to dance all over the place.

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D) A king that is safely castled.

15 ... 0-0 16 ♖b2

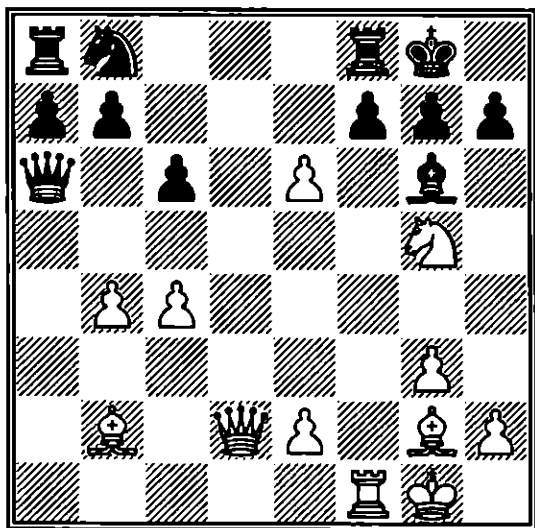
It is always a nice feeling to develop a piece with tempo.

16 ... ♕a6 17 ♘g5!

Now "Big Al" moves in for the kill ...

17 ... ♗g6 18 e6!

This one little pawn causes havoc.



In one fell swoop it creates three main threats:

A) It together with the rook on f1 and the knight on g5 combines forces against f7.

B) It opens up the long black diagonal for White's bishop on b2.

C) Priscilla the pawn is now one step closer to becoming a queen.

So there is just no way for poor Boris to defend against all of White's threats.

18 ... f6

Boris finds the best defence in

an impossible situation, but unfortunately this pawn move gives Alexander new avenues to explore.

19 e7!

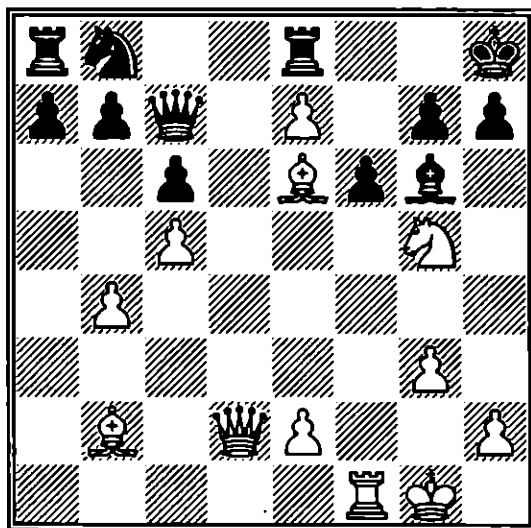
Clearly Priscilla is having a good time!

19 ... ♖e8 20 ♗h3!

Another move that I really like; Alexander brings his least active piece into play. Now the bishop proudly heads for e6.

20 ... ♕b6+ 21 c5 ♕c7 22 ♗e6+ ♔h8

What a position!



Attack Statistics

Offence	♕ ♖ ♗ ♗ ♘ ♙		6
Defence	♔ ♖ ♗	♕	3½

White has no less than a queen, rook, two bishops, knight and last but most definitely not least Priscilla the pawn lined up against Black's king which is boxed in on h8.

23 ♖xf6!!

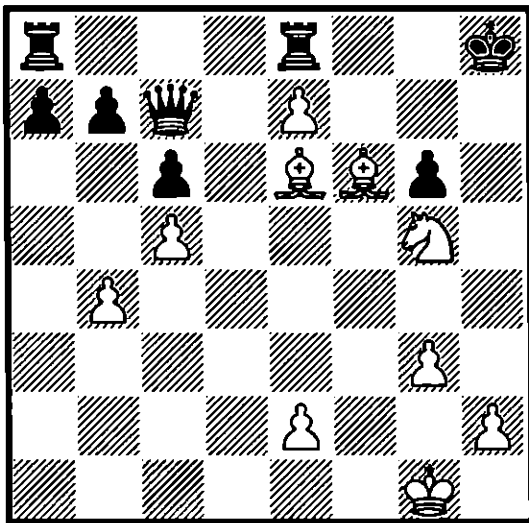
It shouldn't come as a great surprise that White has a tactical sequence to finish the game.

23 ... ♞d7

The black knight gets a chance to say a quick hello before the close of the show. Taking the rook with 23 ... gxf6 would have allowed mate in one.

24 ♖xg6!

The white rook carries on its merry way munching through Black's kingside. Boris now resigned. If he had continued the struggle, the game would most likely have ended as follows: 24 ... hxg6 25 ♔d4 ♞f6 26 ♔xf6!! gxf6 27 ♕xf6 mate.



A truly beautiful mate with just three minor pieces - a rare sight indeed.

GAME 31

There are certain fundamental positions that arise in different

settings but have a number of themes and features in common. The more that you can understand about such positions the better.

In the following game Boris Gulko (a Soviet émigré who was board one of the United States Olympic team in Yerevan in 1996) provides one such highly instructive example of how to play with an Isolated Queen's Pawn or IQP as it is more commonly referred to. His opponent Grigory Kaidanov simply never stood a chance.

White: Boris Gulko

Black: Grigory Kaidanov

U.S. Championship 1994

Panov Botvinnik Attack

1 c4 c6 2 e4 d5 3 exd5
cxd5 4 d4 ♞f6 5 ♞c3 e6 6
♞f3 ♕e7 7 cxd5 ♞xd5

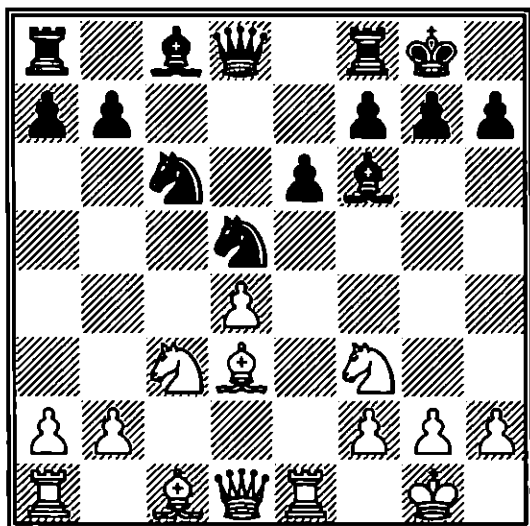
This is the IQP set-up. It can arise from all sorts of openings: the Queen's Gambit Accepted, the Semi-Tarrasch and the Nimzo Indian to name but a few.

8 ♕d3 ♞c6 9 0-0 0-0 10
♖e1 ♕f6

White's pawn on d4 has both good points and bad points. On the plus side White has more space (i.e. more room in which to manoeuvre his pieces), two outposts on e5 and c5 and at-

Pawn Power

tacking chances against the black king.



On the minus side the pawn on d4 can become vulnerable (after all it is isolated!) and Black does have the d5 square for his pieces (usually but not always a knight, as they are the best blockaders).

11 a3!

A multipurpose move that takes away the b4 square from Black's pieces, frees the a2 square for a white piece (usually the white bishop) and in some cases prepares a possible expansion on the queenside with b4.

11 ... ♖d7

Now I would have been sorely tempted to grab the pawn on d4 but according to current theory the position after 11 ... ♖xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 13 ♗xh7+ ♘xh7 14 ♗xd4 is considered better for White due to the more active position of his pieces and Black's slightly dodgy king.

12 ♗c2 ♖c8 13 ♖e4 ♗e7

14 ♗d3!

This powerful move threatens both ♖d6 and ♖g5 on account of the mate on h7. Black is therefore forced to move a pawn in front of his king creating weak squares around his king.

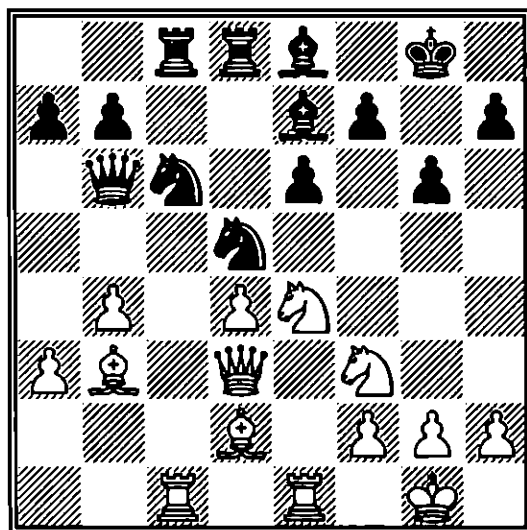
14 ... g6 15 ♗d2!

In chess extreme vigilance is required at all times. How many of your friends would have played the obvious 15 ... ♗h6 without a second's thought and then looked rather sheepish when they were hit by 15 ... ♖cb4! and suddenly found themselves much worse?

15 ... ♗b6 16 b4 ♖fd8 17 ♗b3!

Another good move from Boris. The bishop has done its job on c2 by forcing Black to play g6. It now switches to a more active diagonal.

17 ... ♗e8 18 ♖ac1



Look how Boris has fully mobilised all his army. He is now

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ready to turn up the heat! Meanwhile poor old Grigory has developed all his pieces but not nearly so effectively. Over the next few moves it soon becomes apparent that he is unable to find an active plan.

18 ... a6 19 h4!

Pawns are so good at being used as a crowbar to wrench open the king's defensive cover. Without this one little pawn White would struggle to find a way through.

19 ... ♖a7

It is hard to criticise such a move when there are no really good alternatives to choose from.

20 ♘c5!

The knight now shuts out any hopes that Black may have harboured of creating play on the queenside. It also gangs up on Black's potentially weak e6 point.

20 ... ♘c6 21 h5!

The dismantling of Black's kingside continues.

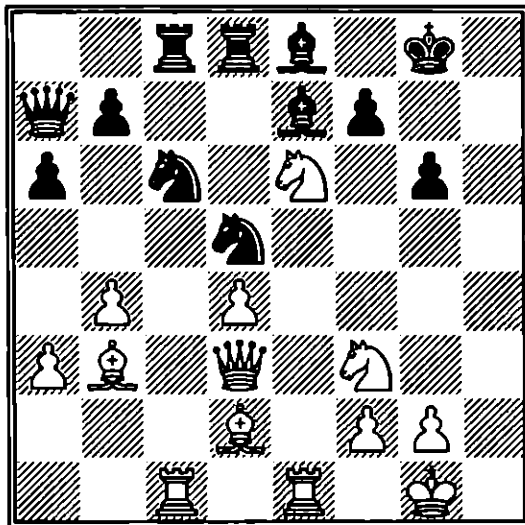
21 ... ♚a7

Grigory unhappily moves his pieces backwards and forwards without any real purpose. His king has become one of his most active pieces which is not normally a good sign in the middle game!

22 hxg6 hxg6 23 ♘xe6!

It just had to be played. Within three moves Black's king loses

all its shielding and is left to fend for itself against White's armada of pieces.



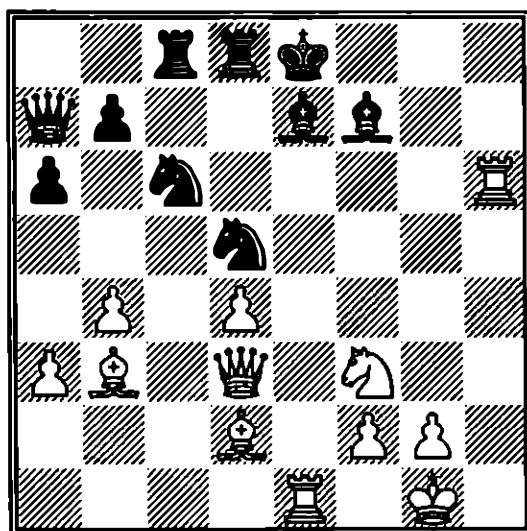
23 ... fxe6 24 ♖xe6 ♔f7 25 ♖xg6+!

The rook continues its demolition job.

25 ... ♚f8

This does not look very promising but the alternatives are just as bad.

26 ♖h6 ♚e8 27 ♖e1!

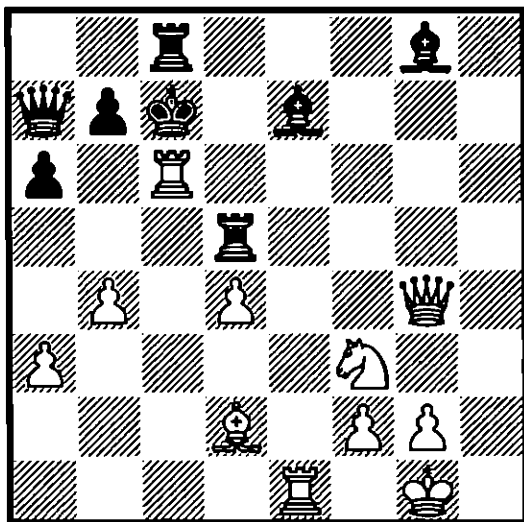


White's last piece is brought into play and decides the outcome immediately. There is no defence to 28 ♖h8+ followed by

Pawn Power

29 ♔f5+. One possible finish could have been 27 ... ♗g8 28 ♕xd5! ♖xd5 29 ♔g6+ ♔d7 30 ♔g4+ ♔c7 31 ♖xc6+! When Black's pieces start to disappear from the board.

And so ended one of the many victories that saw Boris winning the 1994 U.S. Championship by a massive 1½ points.



8 KNIGHT TOUR

I have loved knights ever since I was a little boy, and I will probably still love them when I'm an old man. The knight's magic is that no other piece can bar its way, as if they try, it just jumps over them!

The knight may not be as fleet footed as the queen, rook or bishop but in hand to hand combat it has no equal.

GAME 32

In 1994 I was lucky enough to receive one of the best invitations of my life to the B group of the Credit Suisse Masters in Horgen. I scored an impressive 9 out of 11 in my section while I was able to watch at first hand the likes of Kasparov and Shirov weaving their magic only a few yards away in the A Group. I had one of the best seats in the house!

Alexei Shirov is one of the world's great natural talents. The way he co-ordinates his pieces against one of America's strongest ever players shows the mark of a true genius. I was

not at all surprised to hear that when Alexei was a little boy, he would look at chess with a fellow Latvian, the one and only Mikhail Tal.

White: Alexei Shirov
Black: Joel Benjamin
Horgen 1994
Sicilian Taimanov

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4
 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 ♘c3 a6 6
 ♙e2 ♚c7

This system has recently become very fashionable; I am sure it makes Mark Taimanov very proud.

7 ♙e3 ♘f6 8 0-0 ♙e7 9 f4
 d6 10 ♚e1 0-0 11 ♚g3
 ♘xd4 12 ♙xd4 b5 13 a3
 ♙b7 14 ♚h1 ♙c6 15 ♖ae1
 ♚b7 16 ♙d3

Alexei as usual has managed to point all his pieces at the enemy king.

16 ... b4 17 ♘d1!

The knight is drawn like a magnet towards the kingside.

17 ... g6

A double-edged move that un-

Knight Tour

pins the knight on f6 (as mate on g7 is no longer possible) but it does create holes around the black king, most notably the f6 and h6 squares.

18 ♖f2!

The knight continues on its merry way.

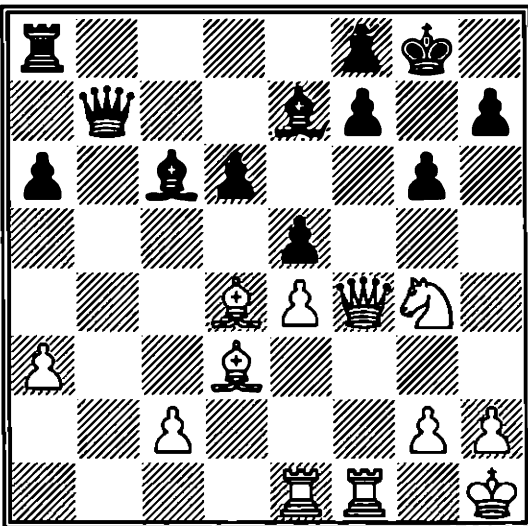
18 ... bxa3 19 bxa3

White has two major long term weaknesses, the a3 and c2 pawns, but Alexei has no intention of allowing the long term to take effect! If by some miracle Joel could exchange queens he would have a superb endgame.

19 ... ♗h5 20 ♕e3 ♖xf4

This move seems irresistible - in one stroke Joel smashes White's centre but he is in for a nasty shock.

21 ♗xf4 e5 22 ♖g4!!



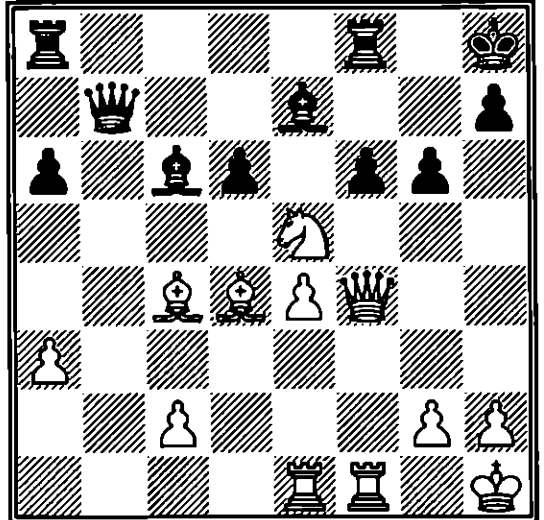
A bolt from the blue!

22 ... f6?!

Joel no doubt still reeling from Alexei's previous move goes

astray. Clearly taking the queen is out of the question on account of 23 ♗h6 mate. Joel should probably have removed the bishop on d4 with 22 ... exd4 but even then after 23 ♗h6+ he is still in a lot of trouble.

23 ♖c4+ ♔h8 24 ♗xe5!!



This move leaves me speechless (or should I say writeless!).

24 ... dxe5 25 ♗xe5! ♔g7

The white queen was immune as Black's king gets sliced apart on the two long diagonals if he takes it. e.g. 25 ... fxe5 26 ♖xe5+ when Black has to suffer heavy casualties to stave off mate.

26 ♗f4!

Alexei makes the rest of the game look easy which of course it is not when someone as good as Joel Benjamin is defending the black side.

26 ... ♖ad8 27 c3 h6 28 ♖b1!

It is the subtle moves such as

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

these which puts Alexei at the top of the world's pecking order. He would have realised that the most tender point in the black position is the f6 pawn. At the moment he has a bishop on d4 together with the queen on f4 and rook on f1 joining forces against f6. Now he brings a fourth piece, the other rook, to make the pressure on f6 unbearable.

28 ... ♖a8 29 ♜b6! ♜xd4

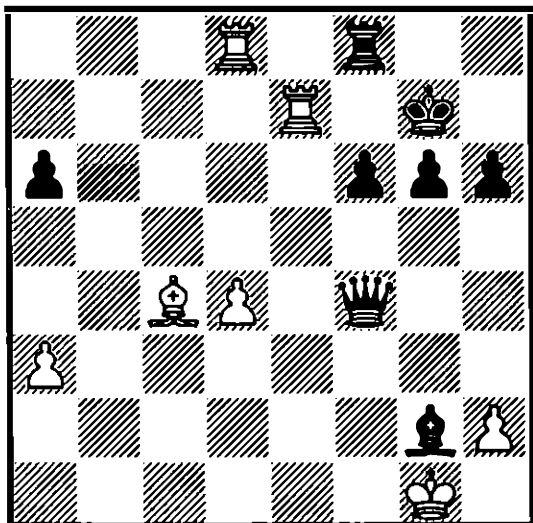
Joel decides to give up the exchange to relieve some of the pressure against f6.

30 cxd4 ♙xe4 31 ♜e1!

Alexei now finds the most precise way to finish the job.

31 ... f5

This loses quickly but the main alternative 31 ... ♙xg2+ also loses in all variations, my favourite of which goes as follows: 32 ♖g1 ♙d8 33 ♜b8! ♖f3 34 ♜xd8! ♖xf4 35 ♜e7+



with mate next move - a kind of penultimate back rank mate.

32 ♖e5+ ♙f6 33 ♜xf6!

Alexei doesn't let opportunities like this go begging. Joel now resigned as he emerges a whole rook down after 33 ... ♜xf6 34 ♖e7+.

The big question Joel would have asked himself after the game is "Where exactly did I go wrong?" "Finding Alexei Shirov on one of his more inspired days!" would have been my reply.

GAME 33

In 1993 I decided to take my chances in a huge knockout tournament in Holland in which many of the world's leading players were taking part. I knew, however, that my chances of actually winning the event were somewhere between nought and zero!

In the very first round I was drawn against one of Georgia's best players, Zurab Sturua, whom I knew was going to be a tough opponent. In the first game I had been extremely fortunate to hold the draw with white. So it was all or nothing in the return game. On the night before, I decided to save time and cheer myself up by playing through on my database only those games that my opponent had lost with the white pieces.

Knight Tour

That came to a grand total of ONE and even that defeat was in a rapidplay game. So much for that bit of preparation!

White: Zurab Sturua
Black: Julian Hodgson
Tilburg 1993
Anti Benko

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5

This is one of Black's sharpest ways to meet 1 d4 - if I was going down, I was going down in flames.

3 ♘f3

This is a rather wimpy reply - I was already beginning to feel more optimistic. The best move has to be 3 d5.

3 ... cxd4 4 ♘xd4 e5!?

I was beginning to enjoy myself.

5 ♘b5 d5 6 cxd5 ♖c5

This is the whole point of the system; Black sacrifices a pawn for active piece play.

7 e3 0-0 8 ♘5c3 e4

White might be a pawn up but his development is distinctly lacking. His king's knight has already made no less than four moves to end up on a square which the other knight would much prefer to be on.

9 ♖e2 ♜e8 10 a3?!

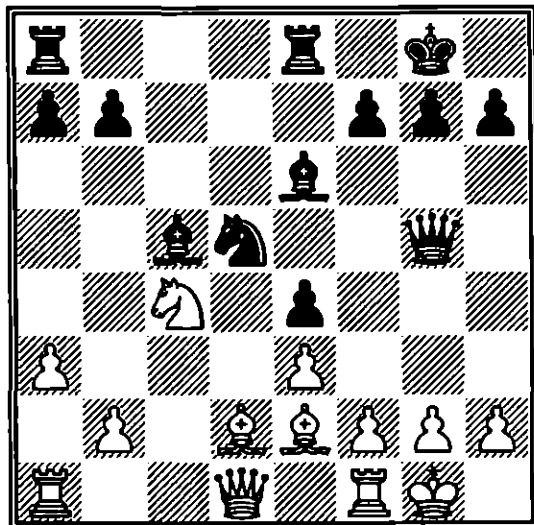
This is a little slow but against 10 ♘d2 I had planned 10 ...

♗b4! regaining the pawn on d5.

10 ... ♘bd7 11 ♘d2 ♘b6

Now there is no way for White to hold on to the pawn on d5.

12 ♘c4 ♘bxd5 13 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 14 0-0 ♖e6 15 ♖d2 ♜g5!



I felt the time was right to go on the offensive. I am already threatening 16 ... ♗h3 winning the exchange.

16 ♜e1 ♜ad8

Now I was really happy as all my pieces were in play and my e4 pawn rather than being a target is very useful in aiding a kingside attack.

17 ♜c2 ♖h3

When attacking it is always a good idea to force the pawns in front of the opponent's king to move forward. This will mean that they will lose control of the important squares nearest the king.

18 g3

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

This is necessary but now the f3 and h3 squares have been irrevocably weakened. I now had a beautiful vision:

A) Exchange the white squared bishops.

B) Swap off my black bishop for my opponent's knight.

C) Then use my knight to run riot on the white squares around my opponent's king.

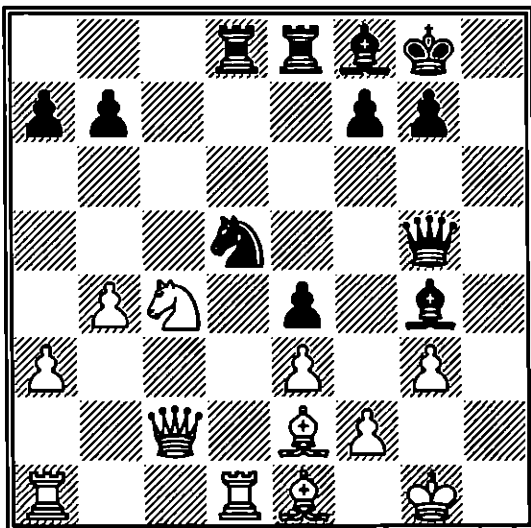
18 ... h5!

Pawns are invariably a great tool with which to increase the pressure. Another point that I had also realised was that the h7 square had been vacated for my knight to reroute to the wonderful g5 square, from where it targets both f3 and h3.

19 b4

Already White has to be careful as the greedy 19 ♗a5 would be crushingly met by 19 ... ♗xe3! ! winning the house.

19 ... ♖f8 20 ♖ed1 h4 21 ♖e1 hxg3 22 hxg3 ♖g4!



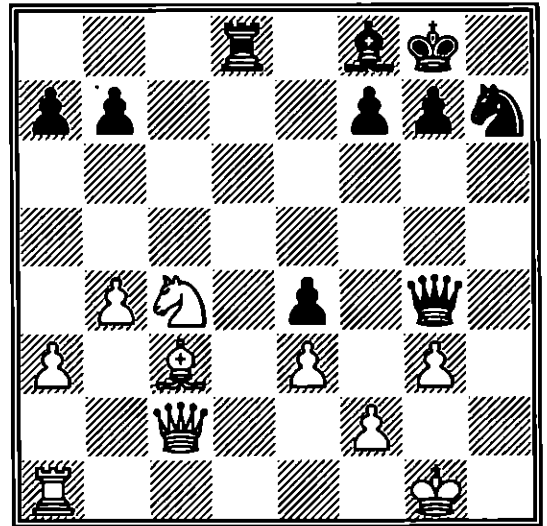
This move is an integral part of

my long term plan to play against my opponent's white squared weaknesses.

23 ♖d4 ♗f6!

Now my knight heads for g5, its dream square, via h7. I think my opponent was at this stage still quite oblivious to the danger he was in.

24 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 25 ♖xg4 ♗xg4 26 ♖c3 ♗h7!



It was only now that he was starting to look worried.

27 ♗e5 ♗c8!!

During the game I was extremely proud of this backward diagonal queen retreat (so easy to overlook). Zurab now looked stunned as not only does my queen eye up the white squares around his king but it also sets up an extremely annoying pin on the c3 bishop.

28 ♗b3 ♗g5!

It was a bit of a bonus that I could play this lovely move and also defend f7 at the same time.

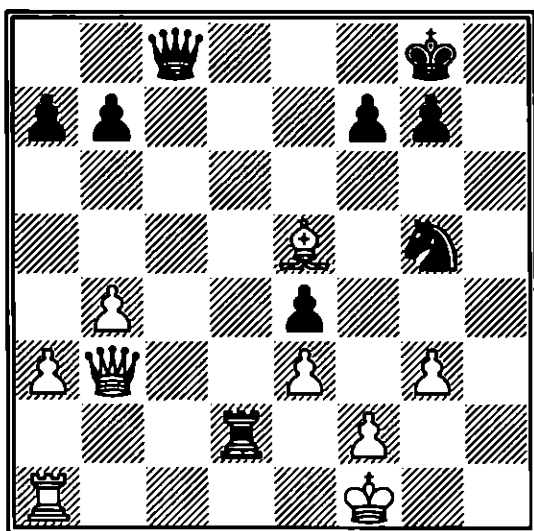
29 ♖d4 ♖d6!

This completes the last stage of my plan, whereby I exchange my bishop for White's one piece that has any control over the white squares.

30 ♔f1

Zurab makes a desperate bid to head for the hills with his king but there is no way out. I should point out that the attempt to exchange queens with 30 ♕c3 would fail tactically to 30 ... ♕xc3 31 ♖xc3 ♖xe5 32 ♖xe5 ♗f3+ winning a piece.

30 ... ♖xe5 31 ♖xe5 ♔d2



My opponent resigned before I was allowed to complete the final phase of my plan, in which I would play my queen to h3 and my knight to f3.

My hopes of further glory came tumbling down when I was wiped out by Artur Yusupov in the very next round.

GAME 34

Every couple of years at the chess Olympiad, England (along with other leading nations) makes an attempt to wrestle the gold medal from the Russian team. This task proves to be an almost impossible dream.

The Russian team has the one player in the world who seems to always turn it on when it really matters - that player is, of course, Gary Kasparov who over the years has produced some quite outstanding performances for Russia. At the Yerevan Olympiad in 1996 he scored a tremendous 7/9. In the following game his Czech opponent never knew what had hit him.

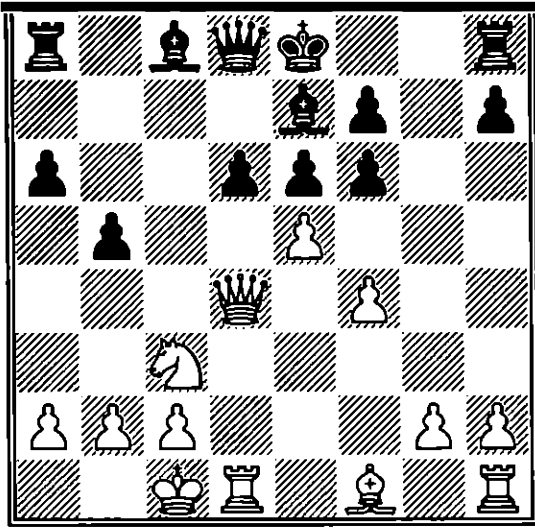
White: Gary Kasparov
Black: Zbynek Hrazek
Yerevan Olympiad 1996
Sicilian Richter-Rauzer

1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4
4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 ♗c6 6
♖g5 e6 7 ♕d2 a6 8 0-0-0
♗xd4 9 ♕xd4 ♖e7 10 f4 b5
11 ♖xf6 gxf6

Gary seems to revel on either side of the Sicilian. The sharp positions that so often ensue seem to suit his style perfectly.

12 e5!

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2



Kasparov's mission is a simple one: he intends to blow the position wide open and then work on the destruction of the black king. This strategy could rebound if Black's bishops ever get going.

12 ... d5

Hracek decides to keep the position closed for the time being.

13 ♔b1

A standard safety measure in such a position.

13 ... b4

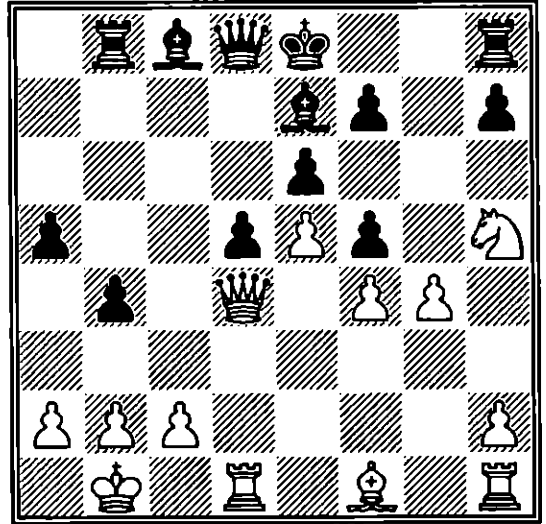
Optically this aggressive move looks good but in fact it is only driving White's knight where it wants to be anyway.

14 ♞e2 a5 15 ♞g3 f5 16 ♞h5!

White's knight has found an ideal attacking post far advanced over enemy lines with the added bonus that it is virtually impossible for Black to budge.

16 ... ♜b8 17 g4!

Kasparov sacrifices the g pawn to make inroads against Black's central pawn fortress. Black's first line of defence is about to be obliterated.



17 ... fxg4 18 f5!

Gary throws more wood onto the fire.

18 ... ♜g8

Accepting the second pawn with 18 ... exf5 would have allowed the crushing 19 e6!

19 ♞f6+!

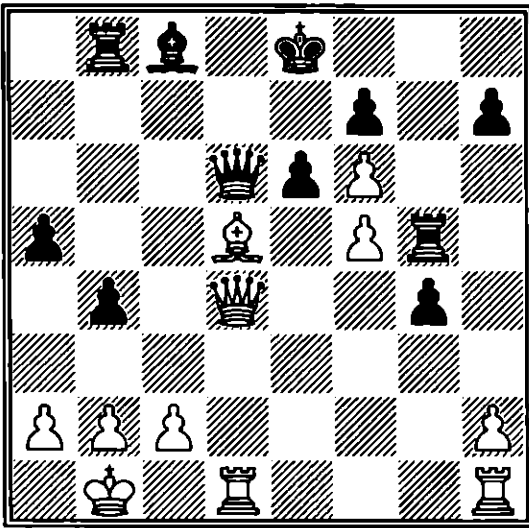
A good move that forces Black to relinquish his best defender - the bishop on e7.

19 ... ♙xf6 20 exf6

The white pawn on f6 is ideally placed for attacking purposes - as long as it stays there Black's king will remain in permanent danger.

20 ... ♚d6 21 ♙g2 ♜g5 22 ♙xd5!

A crunching blow.



The bishop is immune:

A) 22 ... exd5 23 ♖e3+ winning the rook on g5.

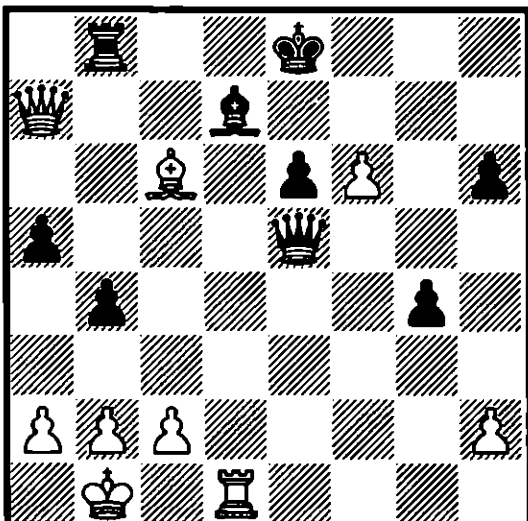
B) 22 ... ♜xd5 23 ♜f4! would hit two rooks and a queen.

22 ... ♖d7 23 ♜he1!

Look how all Gary's pieces are beautifully centralised along the d and e files.

23 ... h6 24 fxe6 fxe6 25 ♜a7

Hracek decided to resign. One pretty conclusion might have been 25 ... ♜e5 26 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 27 ♖c6



27 ... ♖xc6 28 ♜e7 mate.

GAME 35

For a brief spell in the early eighties the f4 Sicilian was all the rage as it was considered as good a way as any of counteracting the Sicilian Defence.

In the weekend circuit around England, firstly David Rumens and then Mark Hebden scored unbelievably well with it. Indeed, so well that the opening came to be known as the Grand Prix Attack. I, myself, together with many other club players joined the bandwagon.

My opponent for this game was William Watson, an old school friend, who also took to playing the opening!

White: Julian Hodgson
Black: William Watson
Brighton 1983
Grand Prix Attack

1 e4 c5 2 f4 g6 3 d4 ♖g7 4 d5 d6 5 ♘c3 ♘f6

From an f4 Sicilian we have transposed almost directly into a Schmid-Benoni which normally arises from 1 d4.

6 ♖b5+!

This is a very annoying check for Black to block. The two natural replies 6 ... ♜bd7 and 6 ... ♖d7 allow 7 e5! which al-

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

ready leaves Black in dire straits.

6 ... ♖fd7 7 a4!

A strong prophylactic move that prevents Black from expanding on the queenside with a later a6 and b5.

7 ... 0-0 8 ♖f3 ♖f6

The knight returns to f6 so fully justifying White's sixth move.

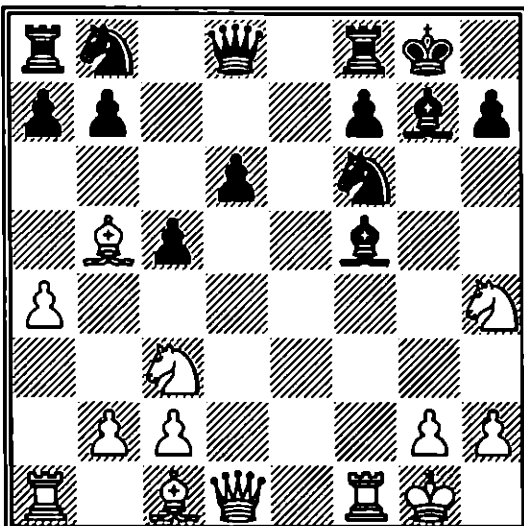
9 0-0 e6?!

Willie tries to challenge White's imposing centre but his position is simply not good enough to undertake such an ambitious plan. He should have settled for either 9 ... ♖g4 to exchange pieces or 9 ... ♖a6 followed by ♖c7 and an eventual b5.

10 dxe6 ♗xe6 11 f5!

I decided to sacrifice a pawn to weaken Black's kingside pawn formation and increase the activity of my remaining pieces, especially the bishop on c1 and rook on f1.

11 ... gxf5 12 exf5 ♗xf5 13 ♖h4!



This is the point behind the pawn sacrifice - my knight heads for the wonderful f5 square, from where it can do untold damage. The effect of Black's lack of development is now beginning to make itself felt.

13 ... ♗g4 14 ♗e2 ♗xe2 15 ♖xe2!

The exchange of white squared bishops has only helped White. My knight will be immune from attack on f5 and what is more my other knight on e2 is on hand to support it from g3. Objectively Black is already lost.

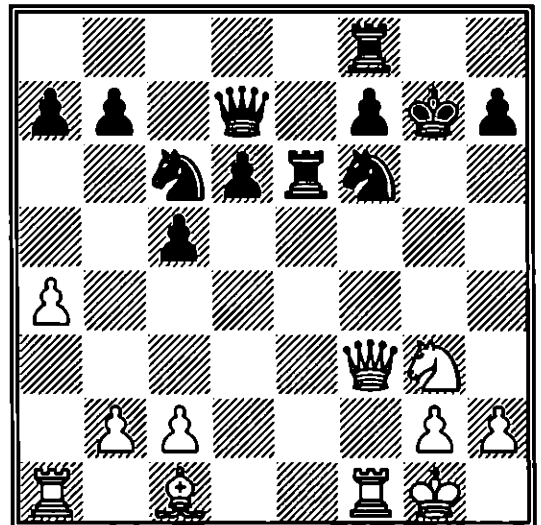
15 ... ♖c6 16 ♖f5 ♗d7 17 ♖eg3 ♖ae8

I now saw a forced way to win material.

18 ♖xg7!

This move removes Black's most valuable kingside pawn.

18 ... ♔xg7 19 ♗f3! ♖e6



20 ♗h6+!!

This wins a whole rook!

Knight Tour

20 ... ♔g8

Taking the bishop would have allowed mate in four more moves as follows: 20 ... ♕xh6 21 ♖f5+ ♕g6 22 ♗g3+ ♕h5 23 ♗h4+ ♕g6 24 ♗h6 mate.

21 ♗f4!

I wanted more than just an exchange.

21 ... ♔h8

Or 21 ... ♖d5 when 22 ♗g4+! wins because the rook on e6 is pinned to the queen.

22 ♖xf8 ♗d8 23 ♗g5 ♗xf8 24 ♖xf6 ♖e5 25 ♖xe6 fxe6 26 ♖h5

And Willie resigned.

GAME 36

It is not very often that I play through a game from a tournament and immediately think that was absolutely brilliant. Joel Lautier's handling of the white pieces was inspirational. When he is on form he plays with an incredible energy and passion for the game that is hard to match - indeed he is one of the very few players in the world who has consistently caused the mighty Gary Kasparov problems over the last few years.

His opponent was the rock solid Peter Leko - the highly talented

Hungarian prodigy who is already considered one of the toughest players in the world to beat. This game sees the irresistible force against the immovable object.

White: Joel Lautier

Black: Peter Leko

Ubeda 1997

Sicilian Scheveningen

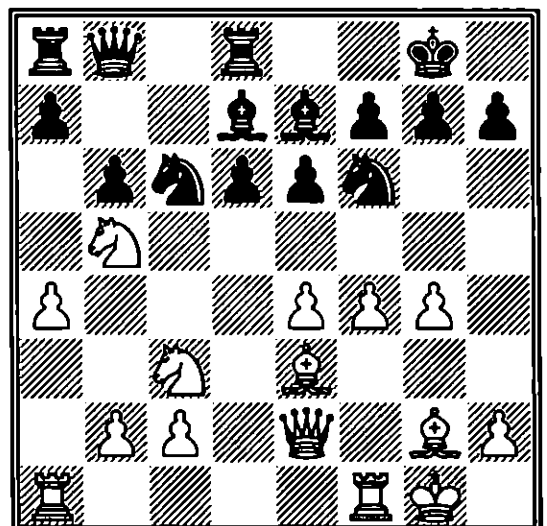
1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♖xd4 ♖f6 5 ♖c3 e6 6 g3

I would have expected Joel to play the ultra sharp 6 g4 (the Keres Attack) but clearly he was only masking his intentions.

6 ... ♖c6 7 ♖g2 ♖d7 8 0-0 ♖e7 9 ♖e3 0-0 10 ♗e2 ♗c7 11 ♖db5! ♗b8 12 a4!

It is very instructive to observe how Joel contains Black's action on the queen's wing and centre before launching his own offensive on the kingside.

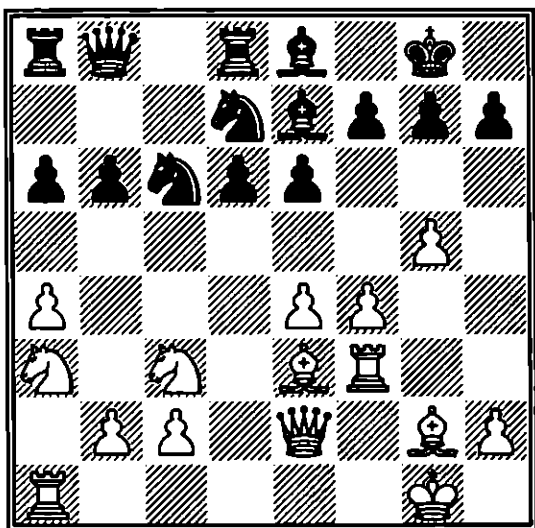
12 ... b6 13 f4 ♖d8 14 g4!



ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

The boys start to roll. Peter can only sit tight and wait.

14 ...a6 15 ♖a3 ♕e8 16 g5 ♜d7 17 ♝f3!



Crude but remarkably effective - Joel simply intends to play his rook to h3, his queen to h5 and then land something big on h7!

17 ...♞c5 18 ♝h3 g6

This prevents White from playing ♜h5 but it's only a temporary measure.

19 ♝f1!

Joel brings up the reserves before letting rip at the black king. There are two main reasons why a kingside attack is potentially so dangerous for Black:

A) Black's rook on a8 and queen on b8 are a long way from making any meaningful contribution to his majesty's well-being.

B) Black has less space and as a result his pieces have less freedom of movement which makes it a lot harder for them to swing from one side of the

board to the other.

19 ...♞d7 20 ♜g4! h5 21 ♜h4!!

Brilliant. It would have been so easy to grab a pawn with the obvious 21 g×h6 which would have been well met by 21 ...♞h7! when Black's position would be extremely hard to break down. Now Joel simply intends to sacrifice his bishop on h5 - Peter is helpless to prevent this.

21 ...♞f8 22 ♞f3 ♞g7 23 ♞xh5! g×h5 24 ♜xh5

Joel destroys the pawn cover in front of Black's king and at the same time brings the heavy artillery into the fray.

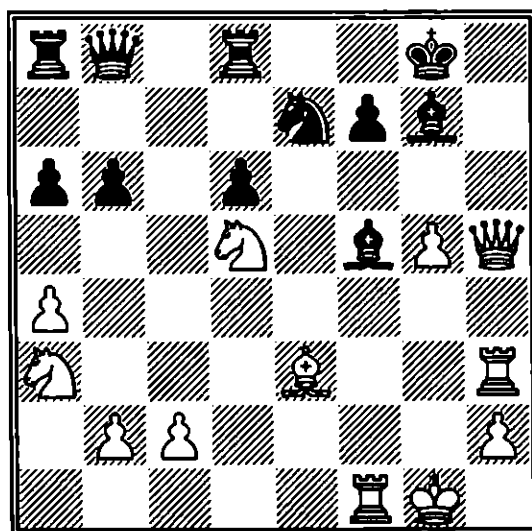
24 ...♞e7 25 f5!

Now the foot soldiers join in.

25 ...exf5 26 exf5 ♞xf5

Peter had to grab this pawn. It was vital to prevent White from playing his pawn to f6.

27 ♞d5!



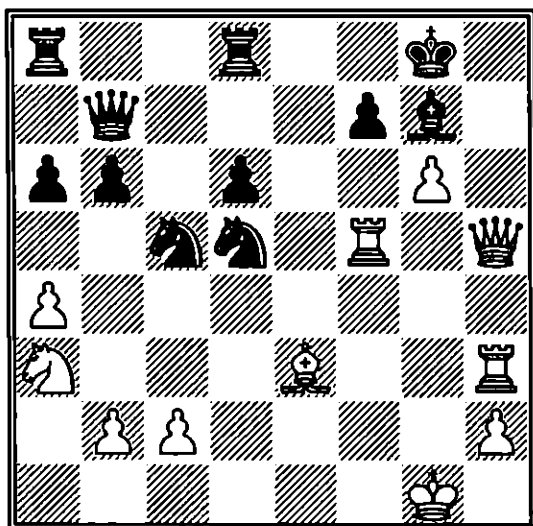
Knight Tour

A wonderful move that exploits the fact that Black no longer has a pawn on e6 controlling d5. The c3 knight which had been patrolling the queenside suddenly enters the game with devastating effect.

27 ... ♖xd5 28 ♜xf5 ♚b7

Black's queen attempts to regroup to the kingside.

29 g6!



I like this move - Joel uses every available resource at his command to get at the black king.

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♚ ♜ ♞ ♠	♝	4½
Defence	♙ ♘	♚ ♞	3

29 ... ♞f6 30 ♜xf6!

Joel does not allow his young opponent even a moment's respite.

30 ... ♜xf6 31 ♚h7+ ♙f8 32 ♜h6+ ♙e8

Black's king makes the long, lonely journey to the queenside

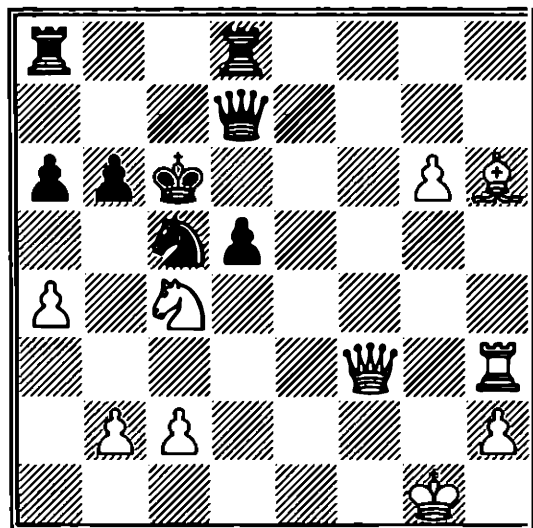
while the white queen mops up the kingside.

33 ♚g8+ ♙d7 34 ♚xf7+ ♙c6 35 ♚xf6

It is now time to take stock. Black has survived the first wave of attacks but not without suffering heavy casualties. Now Joel launches the second wave of the attack giving Peter no time to regroup.

35 ... ♚d7 36 ♚f3+ d5 37 ♞c4!

I have to say this is my favourite move of the game. The poor knight which has been stuck out on a limb on a3 for virtually the entire game comes back with a vengeance.



37 ... ♚e6 38 ♜f4!

Another wonderful move - rather than tamely defend the g6 pawn Joel retreats his bishop to a diagonal from where it can strike at the black king - this attack which was initiated on move 14, is still in full flow

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

almost twenty-five moves later.

38 ... ♖xg6+ 39 ♜g3 ♕e6 40 ♘e5+ ♔b7

With the first time control reached Lautier settles himself for the final onslaught.

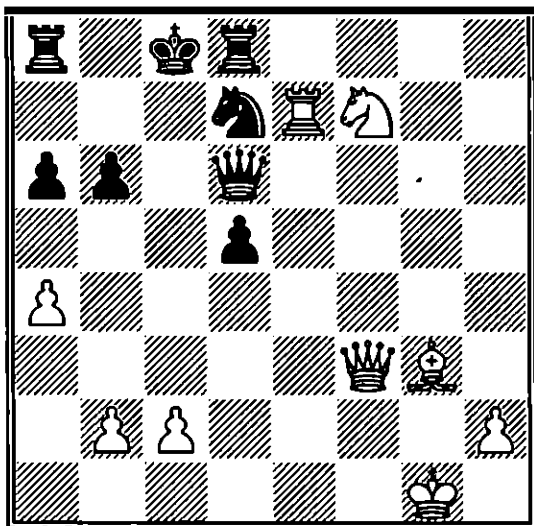
41 ♜g7+ ♘d7 42 ♜e7!!

Ouch! The rook is taboo. 42 ... ♕xe7 is met by 43 ♕xd5+ when mate follows shortly.

42 ... ♕d6 43 ♙g3!

A quiet move that not only shores up the white king but also threatens the deadly 44 ♕f7. It is this kind of move that is so hard to find in the heat of the battle. It is so easy to get depressed looking for a knock-out blow, find there isn't one, and then blunder.

43 ... ♔c8 44 ♘f7!!



Yet another glorious move in a truly glorious game. The knight heads for d6 from where it can wreak untold damage.

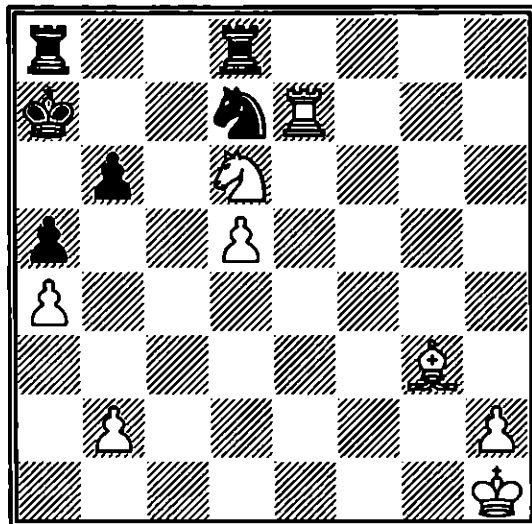
44 ... ♕c5+

You might ask what would have happened if Black had played 44 ... ♕xe7. Well, the answer is 45 ♘d6+ ♕xd6 46 ♙xd6 when Black's unco-ordinated army is no match for White's scorching queen and bishop.

45 ♔h1 ♔b7 46 ♘d6+ ♔a7 47 c4! a5

Peter makes a bolt-hole for his king on a6 but now White's knight has the b5 square to use as a stepping stone.

48 ♕xd5 ♕xd5+ 49 cxd5



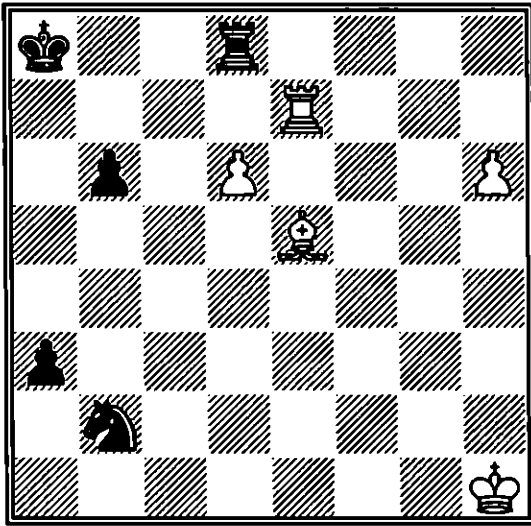
Joel realises that the ensuing endgame is relatively easy as he will win further material due to the pin of the knight on d7.

49 ... ♔a6 50 ♘b5 ♘c5 51 ♘c7+ ♔b7 52 ♘e6+ ♔a6 53 ♘c7+ ♔b7 54 ♘xa8+ ♔xa8 55 d6

The black knight is no match for the bishop and outside h pawn.

55 ... ♘xa4 56 h4 ♘xb2 57 h5 a4 58 h6 a3 59 ♙e5

Knight Tour



Bishops are much better than knights in an ending when there is play on both sides of the board. The bishop on e5 not only shepherds the h pawn but also seriously hinders Black's a pawn - the knight on b2 is a pitiful creature by comparison.

59 ...♘c4 60 ♙f6

Peter now resigned because the h pawn is about to queen.

9 THE DECOY

There are times in a chess game when a piece has too many jobs to perform - quite simply it is over-stretched.

The decoy can come in all forms (often involving a sacrifice of material) but it is essentially the bait that tempts the piece under pressure to leave its other duties, often causing the opponent's position to collapse like a house of cards.

GAME 37

The annual Hastings tournament has a great tradition but I doubt that it has seen too many games as spectacular as the following one. I was first shown it over twenty years ago, by one of my first chess trainers, Cenek Kottnauer, who like me, found the game inspirational.

The loser, Rafael Vaganian, is a household name amongst the world's elite. The winner was a certain Albin Planinc, a highly talented Yugoslavian player, whom I have never seen or met, but judging by some of his games, he was a great attack-

ing player.

White: Rafael Vaganian

Black: Albin Planinc

Hastings 1974

Anti Benko

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 ♘f3
cxd4 4 ♘xd4 e6 5 ♘c3
♙b4 6 ♘db5 0-0 7 a3
♙xc3+ 8 ♘xc3

White has netted the two bishops but Black has a useful lead in development. Note the position of the two kings: Black's king is nicely tucked away on g8 while White's king is firmly rooted on e1 with no immediate prospects of finding sanctuary.

8 ...d5!

Black aims to open the position as quickly as possible.

9 ♙g5 h6 10 ♙xf6 ♚xf6 11
cxd5 exd5 12 ♚xd5

This is an extremely hot pawn to snatch. I would have preferred the safer 11 e3 but if you want to win games at the very top level you have to take your chances.

12 ...♖d8

The Decoy

Such moves are always extremely pleasant to make. The rook comes to an open file with gain of tempo.

13 ♖f3

Would you like to exchange queens?

13 ... ♗b6!

Not today thank you. Planinc's queen probes a potential weakness in White's queenside.

14 ♖d1

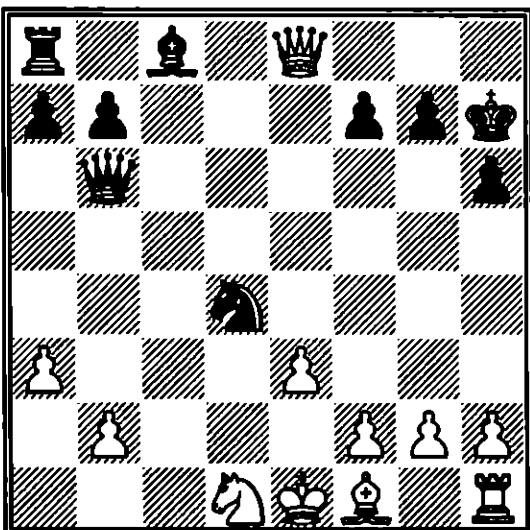
Rafael uses tactical means to defend the b pawn but possibly 14 ♖b1 was the wiser course of action.

**14 ... ♖xd1+ 15 ♘xd1 ♘c6
16 ♗e3**

Again Vaganian offers the exchange of queens but again his opponent, quite rightly, declines.

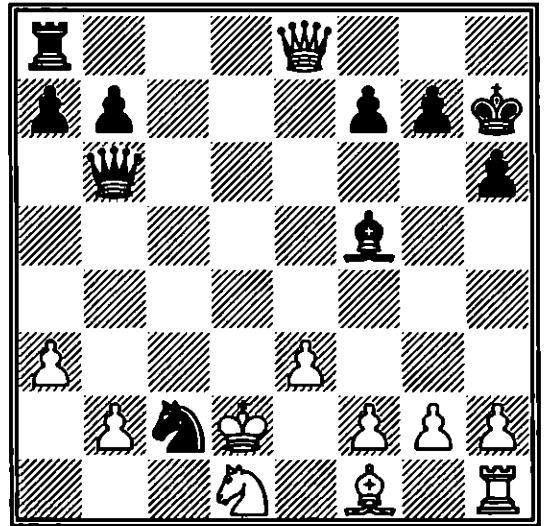
16 ... ♘d4 17 ♗e8+ ♔h7 18 e3

At a glance it might look as if White is doing quite well.



He is a pawn up, the knight on d4 is attacked, and White's queen on e8 ties down the black queenside. But that is not the whole story. White's king is still stuck in the centre, with his kingside pieces still on their original squares. The fireworks are about to begin!

18 ... ♘c2+! 19 ♔d2 ♙f5!!

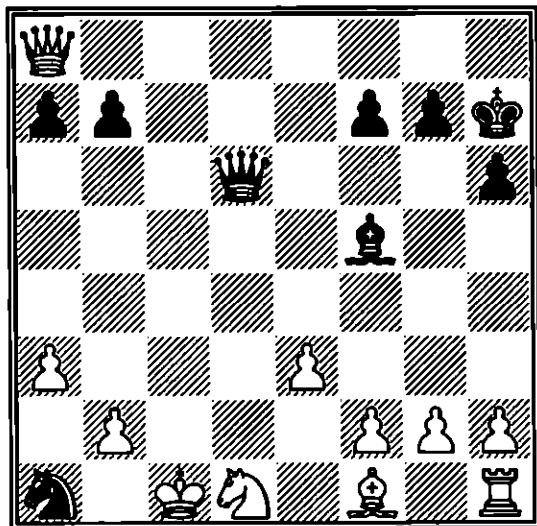


Absolutely brilliant! Planinc does not hesitate for a moment in jettisoning more material to ensnare the white king.

20 ♗xa8 ♗d6+ 21 ♔c1?

Rafael commits a far from obvious mistake. He should have boldly advanced his king up the board with 21 ♔c3 when after 21 ... ♗xd1 it is clear Black has fantastic compensation for the exchange but White can fight on as there is no immediate mate. In the long run White's position will be difficult to defend; his king is exposed and his kingside pieces are a long way from getting developed.

21 ... ♞a1!!



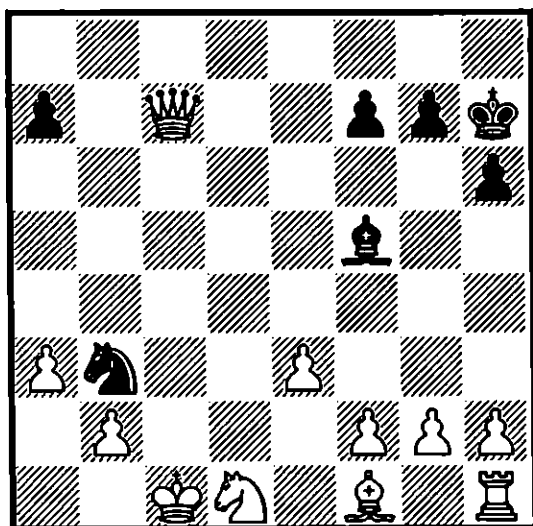
Words cannot really do this move justice. It is not very often that a knight goes to the corner of the board in order to deliver the finishing coup.

22 ♚xb7

So Black to play and win. Are you up to the challenge?

22 ... ♚c7+!!

Yes, the decoy works again. Black forces White's queen to relinquish control over the crucial b3 square. Vaganian resigned on account of 23 ♚xc7 ♞b3 mate.



GAME 38

Alexander Beliavsky, or "big AI" as he is more affectionately known, has been around for as long as I can remember. Only last November he won a strong tournament in which I was also playing. I was very impressed by the calm and efficient way he went about his business. The tournament reached a climax in the last round when "Big AI" needed to win in order to come first outright. Let's now see him in action when the pressure is really on.

White: Alexander Beliavsky

**Black: Alexander Strikovic
Cacak 1997**

King's Indian Defence

1 d4

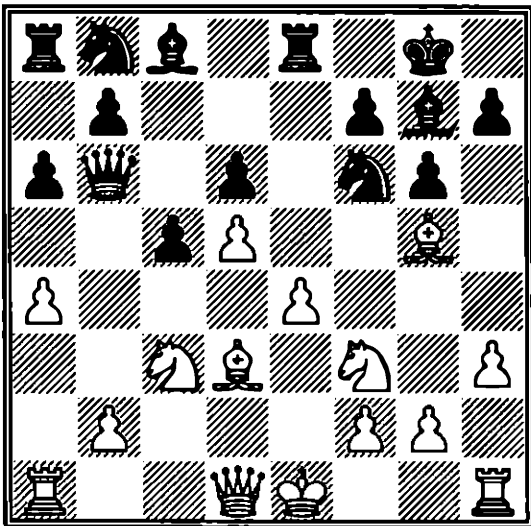
One of Beliavsky's main strengths is that he plays the main lines of both 1 d4 and 1 e4 which makes him extremely hard to prepare for. I have also noticed that since he was one of Gary Kasparov's seconds in his match with Nigel Short, he has broadened his already impressive opening repertoire.

1 ... ♞f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♞c3 ♙g7
4 e4 d6 5 h3 0-0 6 ♙g5 c5
7 d5 a6 8 a4 e6 9 ♙d3 exd5
10 cxd5 ♚e8 11 ♞f3

The Decoy

The opening which started out as a King's Indian has now transposed directly into a Modern Benoni. There is one fundamental problem for Black in this position: he does not have enough room for all his queen-side pieces as the bishop on c8 and knight on b8 would both like to be on d7. We can now see why Alexander's little pawn move 5 h3 is so useful as it prevents Black from playing either g4 or g4 .

11 ... ♖b6



It would be very easy for me to criticise this seemingly reckless queen sortie but I won't as I don't see a reasonable alternative plan for Black. Clearly Black would want to expand on the queenside by playing for b5 but that seems out of the question here.

12 0-0!

Well played! The automatic d2 would allow Black to complicate with xe4 followed by f5 exploiting the

pin on the e-file.

12 ... ♜xb2 13 ♔c1 ♞bd7 14 ♞d2!

This is a key move. I remember being told by Yuri Razuvaev, a very strong Russian trainer, that in the Benoni White's king's knight is a very important piece. Here we can see why as it heads for the wonderful c4 square from where it both pressures Black's vulnerable d6 pawn and aids the advance of the white central pawn mass.

14 ... ♜b6

Black's queen beats a hasty retreat.

15 ♞c4 ♜c7

So for one measly pawn Black's queen has had to make no less than four moves. White has used this time to fully mobilise his army.

16 f4

It is worth pointing out that although White is a pawn down he actually has a five to four majority on the kingside, which aids his attack enormously.

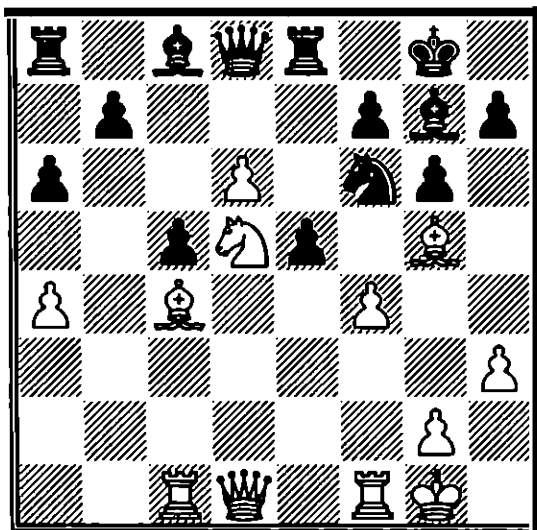
16 ... ♞b6 17 e5!

Now the fun really begins!

17 ... ♞xc4 18 ♔xc4 dxe5 19 d6! ♜d8 20 ♞d5

White might be two pawns down but just compare the activity of each sides' pieces.

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2



A) White's bishop on c4 is bearing down on f7.

B) The white knight on d5 and bishop on g5 combine very effectively against Black's knight on f6.

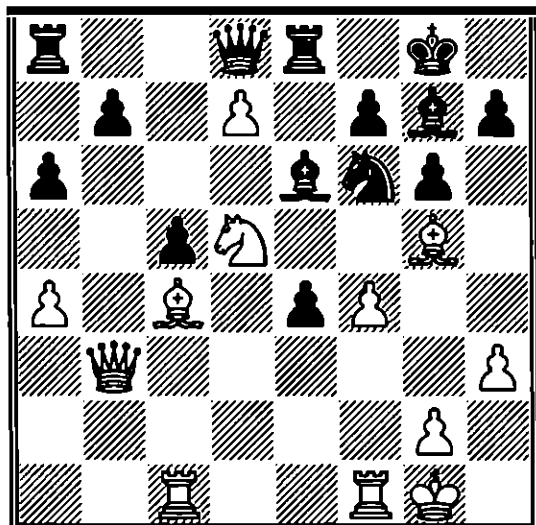
C) White's major pieces are ready to come into the proceedings at a moment's notice.

Objectively, Black is already lost.

20 ...e4 21 ♚b3!

The queen increases the latent pressure against f7.

21 ...♗e6 22 d7!



This is the move that does the

real damage; it destroys the coordination of Black's army. There is no good way for Black to remove this thorn of a pawn.

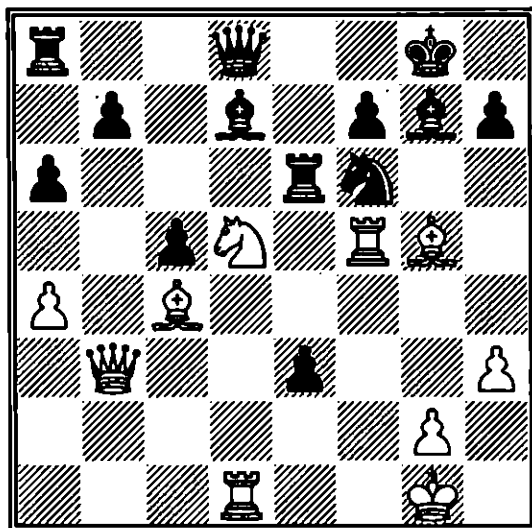
22 ...♗xd7 23 ♖cd1!

I like the way Beliavsky calmly increases the activity of all his pieces before going in for the kill. The threat is now 24 ♖xf6+.

23 ...♗e6 24 f5

Normally I would have awarded such a move an exclamation mark as the pawn does not only gain time by attacking Black's rook, but it also brings White's rook on f1 into the game. However, there was an immediate win with the rather prosaic 24 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6 as 25 ♚xb7! is decisive.

24 ...gxf5 25 ♗xf5 e3

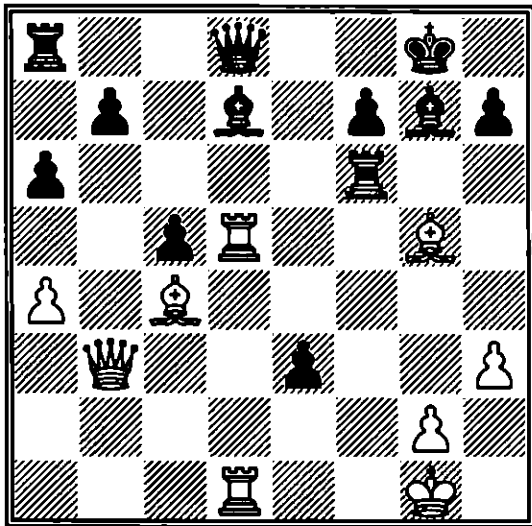


I was actually watching this stage of the game as it was being played. Although I was sure that White was winning I could see no clear knockout blow but then Beliavsky played his next couple of moves and

The Decoy

everything fell into place.

26 ♖xf6+! ♜xf6 27 ♜fd5!



I really like this move: one moment it is Black's knight on f6 that is pinned then suddenly Alexander switches the point of attack to Black's bishop on d7. There is now nothing that Black can do. It is a classic case of PIN and WIN.

27 ...b5

Finally this thematic move is played, but it is a little late; the battle has already come and been won.

**28 ♜xd7 ♜e8 29 axb5 axb5
30 ♜xb5 e2 31 ♙xe2**

Black now resigned as further material loss is inevitable. e.g. a rook move such as 31 ... ♜g6 would allow 32 ♜d8!

GAME 39

Tony Miles plays a tremendous amount of games during the

year, generally with quite outstanding results. It was therefore not so surprising that we would one day meet over the chess board while on our foreign sorties.

The following encounter took place in the beautiful old Spanish town of Zaragoza. This game is the one and only time that I have managed to overcome England's first ever grandmaster.

**White: Tony Miles
Black: Julian Hodgson
Zaragoza 1993
Anti Benko**

1 d4 ♖f6 2 ♖f3

This move is a real pain if your main defence to 1 d4 is the Benko Gambit.

2 ... c5 3 d5

Now we see the problem. There is no pawn on c4 for Black to undermine.

3 ... b5

I decided to play the move any way although I don't really trust it for it has lost much of its point.

4 ♙g5!

I thoroughly approve of this move. White has reached a normal Trompovsky position with the moves ♖f3 and b5 thrown in which must be in White's favour.

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

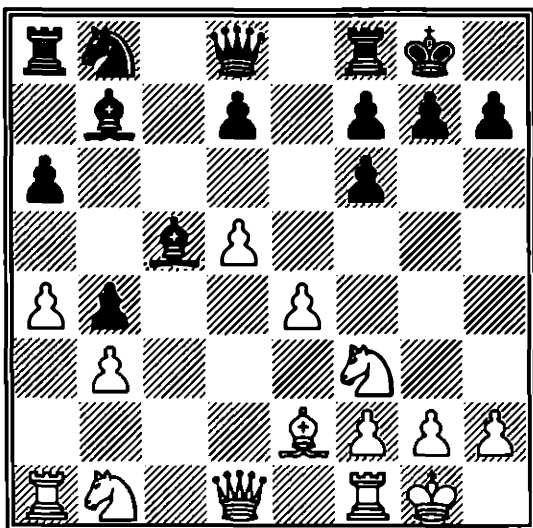
4 ... ♖b7 5 ♖xf6 exf6 6 e4 c4

I had noticed in my pre-game preparation that Rafael Vaganian had used this move with success in the German Bundesliga a year earlier. The idea is to plonk the black bishop on c5 where it stands rather well.

7 a4!

Tony immediately sets about my rather loose queenside.

7 ... a6 8 ♖e2 ♖c5 9 0-0 0-0 10 b3 cxb3 11 cxb3 b4!



After playing this move I began to feel quite happy as the bishop on c5 not only holds the queenside together but also eyes f2.

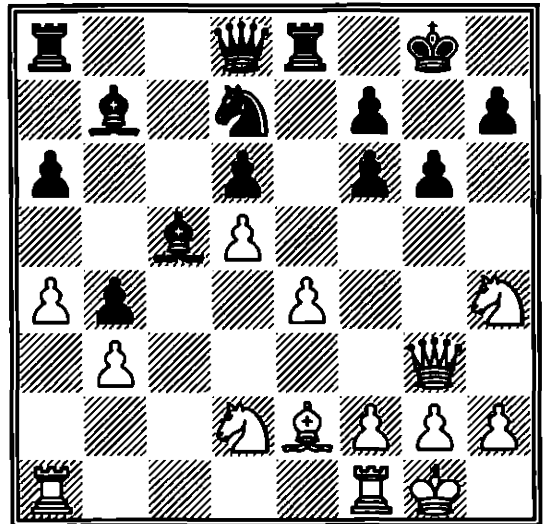
12 ♘bd2 ♜e8 13 ♛c2 d6 14 ♛d3 ♘d7 15 ♘h4

Placing the knight on h4 looks distinctly dodgy but it is already hard to suggest a constructive plan for White.

15 ... g6

A good move that not only prevents White's knight from hopping into f5 but also prepares f5 undermining White's fragile centre.

16 ♛g3



16 ... ♖xd5!

I now exploit the pin along the e file winning a pawn and ridding myself of my worst minor piece in the process.

17 ♖xa6 ♖xe4 18 ♘xe4 ♜xa6

Capturing the right piece. 18 ... ♜xe4 would allow White to skewer the two rooks with 19 ♖b7

19 ♛d3 f5!?

During the game I was extremely proud of this move but looking back on it in the cold light of day I suspect it is not the best move - 19 ... ♛a8! would have been objectively stronger but in the heat of the battle objectivity is a quality that often falls by the wayside!

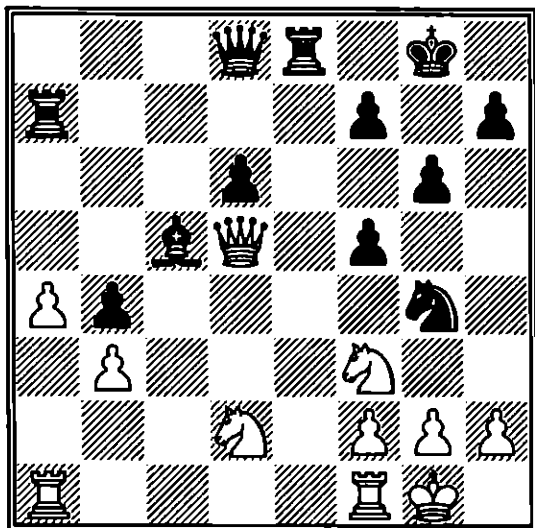
The Decoy

20 ♖d2

Tony gets bluffed out. He should have taken the plunge and grabbed the rook on a6. I have to confess that I had overlooked that after 20 ♛xa6 fxe4 White was not obliged to play 21 g3 when after 21 ... ♗e5 Black would have a big initiative for the exchange. Instead Tony could go on the counter-attack with 21 ♛c6! when probably Black's best is 21 ... e3! with reasonable compensation for the exchange.

20 ... ♖a7 21 ♗hf3 ♗e5 22 ♛d5 ♗g4!

In the long term White has good prospects due to the outside protected passed pawn on a4, so Black has to create threats in the middlegame. The f2 pawn is clearly the most vulnerable point of White's position which is precisely where Black's pieces head towards.



23 ♗c4

The obvious 23 h3? would allow

23 ... ♗xf2 24 ♖xf2 ♛b6! 25 ♖af1 ♖e2 when White must lose a rook.

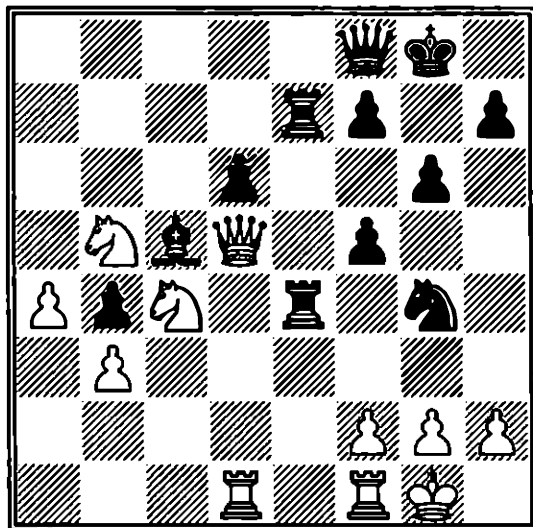
23 ... ♖e2!

The pressure against f2 reaches breaking point.

24 ♖ad1 ♛f8!

I could have played 24 ... ♗xf2+ picking up another pawn but I decided to head for bigger game - the white king! It was around this stage that I had already seen the continuation that occurred in the game.

25 ♗d4 ♖e4 26 ♗b5 ♖ae7!



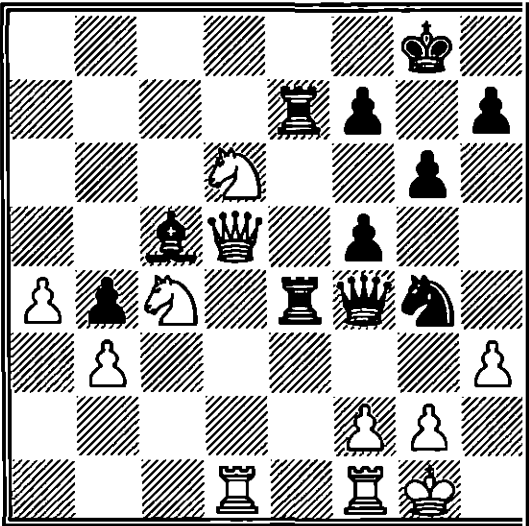
Black has fully activated all his pieces in the area where they will be most effective - the kingside! White's knights optically look impressive but they are a long way from the vicinity of the white king to give it added protection.

27 ♗bxd6 ♛h6!

Her majesty the queen decides to make her presence felt with devastating consequences.

Attack Statistics			
Offence	♔ ♖ ♗ ♘ ♙		5
Defence	♚ ♜	♛ ♞ ♟	3½

28 h3 ♛f4



Tony now resigned on account of the following three variations which all end in mate:

A) 28 ... ♛f4 29 g3 ♛xg3+ 30 ♖h1 ♛h2 mate.

B) 28 ... ♛f4 29 hxg4 ♙xf2+! 30 ♖xf2 ♖e1+ 31 ♖xe1 ♖xe1+ 32 ♖f1 ♖xf1 mate.

C) 28 ... ♛f4 29 hxg4 ♙xf2+ 30 ♖h1 ♛h6 mate.

GAME 40

There are some games where it is better to simply sit back and enjoy them rather than try to make too much sense of them. The following game is one such example.

At a recent tournament I asked

the likeable Bulgarian number 2, Kiril Georgiev, if he could recommend to me one of his games for my next book on attacking chess. In an instant he replied that he had played a great game against Max Dlugy, the Blitz King of America. I found the game on my database and was amazed to see that for no less than 13 moves in a complex middlegame, Kiril had not one but two queens on the board!

As a slight digression, I have a certain soft spot for Kiril because he and his wife decided to name their child Julian after hearing my name in a tournament we played together in Switzerland. So somewhere now in Bulgaria there is a little Julian Georgiev roaming around.

White: Kiril Georgiev

Black: Max Dlugy

Belfort 1983

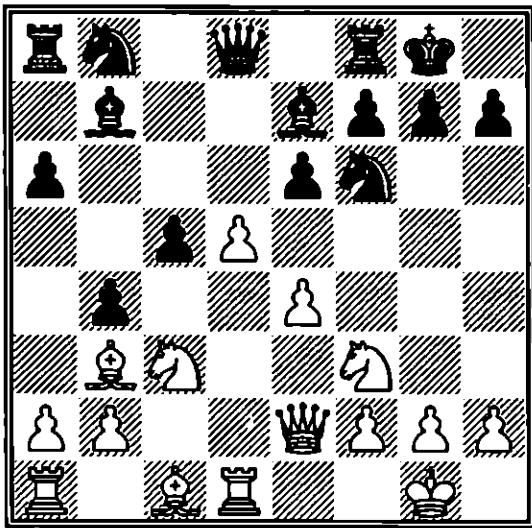
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4

Max has remained very loyal to the Queen's Gambit Accepted, playing it almost without exception.

3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♙xc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 ♛e2 b5 8 ♙b3 ♙b7 9 ♖d1 ♙e7 10 ♘c3 0-0 11 e4 b4 12 d5!

The Decoy



Kiril means business today!

12 ... bxc3

Max whips off the knight on c3 - after all a piece is a piece.

13 dxe6

Max might have won a piece but Kiril has one hungry pawn.

13 ... ♖b6 14 e5 ♘e4 15 exf7+ ♔h8

It is natural that Max should want to preserve his piece advantage but returning some of the booty with 15 ... ♖xf7! would have been a more prudent course of action. Now White's pawn on f7 is a monster which the whole game revolves around.

16 e6 ♙f6 17 ♘e5!

Let the show commence. The knight cannot be taken as then the e pawn would march on unchecked.

17 ... ♚c7 18 ♘g6+!!

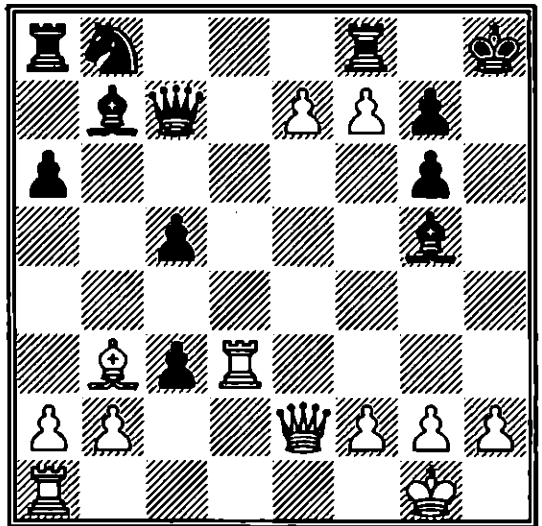
Did you see this one coming? By opening the h file Kiril has entwined the black king into a

mating net.

18 ... hxg6 19 ♖d3

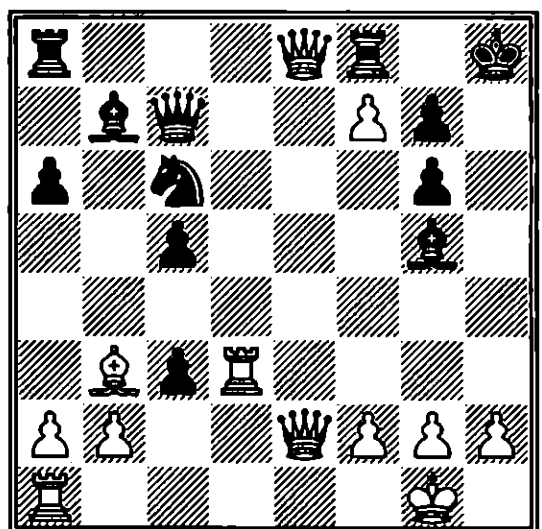
The natural follow up which threatens a deadly check on h3.

19 ... ♘g5 20 ♙xg5 ♙xg5 21 e7!



The bishop on g5 has become overloaded. It cannot guard against both the mate down the h file and halt the advance of White's e pawn.

21 ... ♘c6 22 e8♚



The e pawn touches down on the eighth rank, but the real star of the show has to be White's pawn on f7, which has not only

ATTACK with GM Julian Hodgson 2

helped shepherd it to its crowning glory but also pinned down Black's king in the corner.

22 ... cxb2 23 ♖xb2!

Kiril removes the troublesome b pawn and at the same time threatens mate in two.

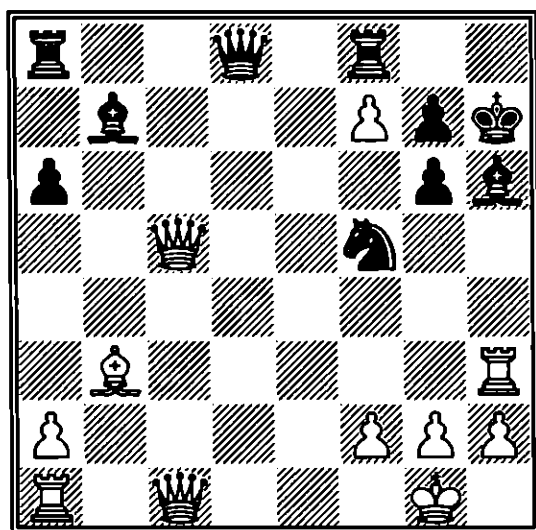
23 ... ♘d4 24 ♜h3+ ♙h6 25 ♕e3!

Again threatening mate in two.

25 ... ♔h7 26 ♖bc1!

Without wishing to become too boring Kiril again threatens mate in two.

26 ... ♘f5 27 ♕exc5 ♕d8

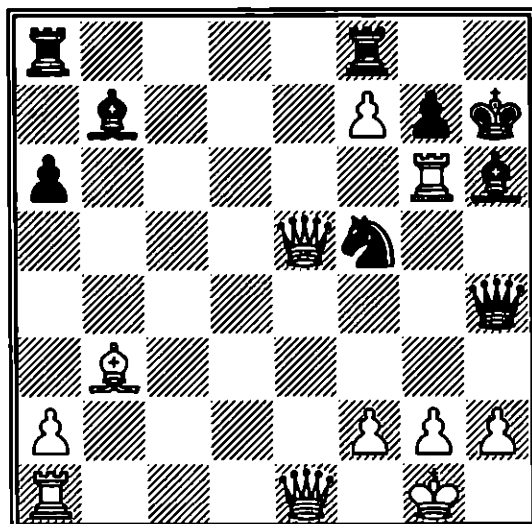


The position has clarified somewhat. Kiril has a queen and two pawns for a bishop and knight, which is an overwhelming material advantage but with three queens on the board the position is more suited for a computer to analyse rather than a human. This position would have definitely been giving me a headache!

28 ♕e1 ♕g5 29 ♜g3

Kiril sees it. Max's first threat of the game is quashed.

29 ... ♕f4 30 ♕ce5 ♕h4 31 ♜xg6!



Kiril continues to play for mate. As a general rule two queens are quite a useful attacking force!

31 ... ♔xg6 32 ♙e6 ♕g5 33 g3 ♕f6 34 g4! ♕xe5

And finally Max gets to remove one of White's queens but there is still another one to wreak havoc.

35 ♕xe5 ♘e7

Max has worked something of a miracle; he has almost reached material equality, with a rook, bishop and knight for a queen and three pawns. But now his exposed king is about to come under heavy fire.

36 ♙f5+ ♔xf7 37 ♕e6+ ♕e8 38 ♙g6+ ♔d8 39 ♜d1+!

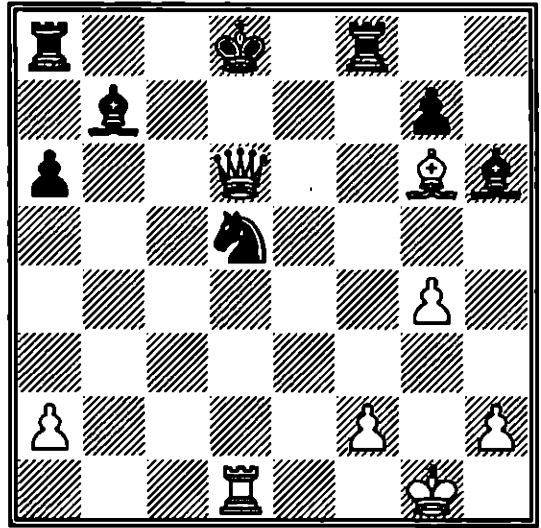
The Decoy

White's rook, which has been having something of a holiday on a1, decides that the time has come for it to deliver the finishing touches.

39 ... ♞d5 40 ♚d6+

It is quite appropriate that Kiril's final move should be a queen one.

I can't recall ever seeing one side having two queens on the board for so long so early in the game. I doubt also that I will ever see something similar again.





ATTACK

WITH

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